



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

一  
二  
三  
四  
五  
六  
七  
八  
九  
十  
十一  
十二  
十三  
十四  
十五  
十六  
十七  
十八  
十九  
二十  
二十一  
二十二  
二十三  
二十四  
二十五  
二十六  
二十七  
二十八  
二十九  
三十  
三十一  
三十二  
三十三  
三十四  
三十五  
三十六  
三十七  
三十八  
三十九  
四十  
四十一  
四十二  
四十三  
四十四  
四十五  
四十六  
四十七  
四十八  
四十九  
五十  
五十一  
五十二  
五十三  
五十四  
五十五  
五十六  
五十七  
五十八  
五十九  
六十  
六十一  
六十二  
六十三  
六十四  
六十五  
六十六  
六十七  
六十八  
六十九  
七十  
七十一  
七十二  
七十三  
七十四  
七十五  
七十六  
七十七  
七十八  
七十九  
八十  
八十一  
八十二  
八十三  
八十四  
八十五  
八十六  
八十七  
八十八  
八十九  
九十  
九十一  
九十二  
九十三  
九十四  
九十五  
九十六  
九十七  
九十八  
九十九  
一百

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

---

**THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA.** 3 vols. crown 8vo.

"If our readers wish to peruse, for the sake of pure entertainment, a fascinating story which scarcely flags in interest from the first page to the last, we advise them to submit themselves to the romantic pages of 'The Doctor's Dilemma.' It is all story; every page contributes something to the result."—*British Quarterly Review*.

"The best novel of the week.....In descriptive writing the author must be given a high place."—*Athenæum*.

"Clever and agreeable."—*Court Express*.

"Extremely interesting, and well-written."—*Manchester Examiner*.

"This novel has many of the best features of a popular tale. There is much variety in its incidents, and many of them are strikingly told."—*Edinburgh Courant*.

---

HENRY S. KING & Co., 65 CORNHILL, AND 12 PATERNOSTER ROW.

# HESTER MORLEY'S PROMISE.

BY

HESBA STRETTON,

*Author of "The Doctor's Dilemma," &c., &c.*

VOL. III.

LONDON :

HENRY S. KING & Co., 65, CORNHILL.

---

1873.

[*All rights Reserved.*]

# CONTENTS.

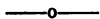
## VOL. III.

---

	PAGE
CHAPTER I.	
AT JOHN MORLEY'S DOOR . . . . .	I
CHAPTER II.	
ON THE OTHER SIDE . . . . .	10
CHAPTER III.	
A FRUITLESS EFFORT. . . . .	25
CHAPTER IV.	
ALONE IN LONDON. . . . .	32
CHAPTER V.	
THEN AND NOW. . . . .	47
CHAPTER VI.	
A NIGHT OF TERROR. . . . .	55
CHAPTER VII.	
BESIDE HIMSELF . . . . .	63
CHAPTER VIII.	
A CITY OF REFUGE . . . . .	76
CHAPTER IX.	
SATURDAY NIGHT . . . . .	84
CHAPTER X.	
NO CLUE . . . . .	97
CHAPTER XI.	
ANOTHER HESTER . . . . .	108

CHAPTER XII.	PAGE
THREE MONTHS' SUSPENSE . . . . .	121
CHAPTER XIII.	
AN INSPIRATION. . . . .	130
CHAPTER XIV.	
IN THE SUNSHINE . . . . .	140
CHAPTER XV.	
WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN . . . . .	158
CHAPTER XVI.	
GOOD NEWS FOR CARL . . . . .	168
CHAPTER XVII.	
TO BURGUNDY . . . . .	178
CHAPTER XVIII.	
AT HOME AGAIN . . . . .	186
CHAPTER XIX.	
THE LAST MOMENT . . . . .	196
CHAPTER XX.	
A FULL FORGIVENESS . . . . .	208
CHAPTER XXI.	
CARL'S HOUR. . . . .	216
CHAPTER XXII.	
BROUGHT TO LIGHT . . . . .	226
CHAPTER XXIII.	
CHECK-MATED . . . . .	241
CHAPTER XXIV.	
LAST WORDS . . . . .	251

# Hester Morley's Promise.



## CHAPTER I.

### *AT JOHN MORLEY'S DOOR.*

FOR John Morley there had been a brief interval of interest in outer things, and of distraction from his own morbid broodings, during the last few weeks of Carl's residence in Little Aston ; but as soon as he was gone, and the old routine closed in upon the house again, the faint throb of quicker vitality died away, and left him more dead than before. Even the fresh enthusiasm and hope of Carl's nature, tinged as they were with the buoyancy of a spirit which had not yet come into very close contact with the real world, had added a deeper shade to his disgust of life. He had looked back, and seen, through Carl's eyes, the fair visions which had attended his own early days ; and the realities which had met him, in the march of the years, only grew more intolerable



in their burden of shame. The malady of John Morley, so long and carefully fostered, had reached a point where it was beyond his own power, or that of any man, to heal. Grant, who had cherished some hope, while Carl was in daily intercourse with him, gave up the case in despair. More closely than ever John Morley confined himself to his gloomy and unwholesome parlour, more unwholesome for his soul than his body, and there brooded over the dim memories of his grief.


But they were not dim just then. As if Carl had sharpened in every respect the keen sword of the spirit, John Morley's brain presented to him clearer and more poignant recollections of the past. It seemed at times as if he almost saw the face of his faithless wife, and caught the echo of her voice somewhere upon the very confines of his ear. There was a subtle, mysterious feeling of her presence close at hand, haunting him with an undefinable terror. The closed room overhead did not seem uninhabited, though he could hear neither voice nor step in it. Once before entering his bedroom he stole cautiously to the locked door, and listened though the empty key-hole, if there were any

movement within. No grave could be more silent, and he retreated shuddering. In his chamber he could not banish the impalpable presence. He felt that he had but to strain his sight a little, and listen with a more attentive ear, and he should succeed in seeing and hearing this shadowy visitant. But dimness of sight, and dulness of hearing must be closing in upon him, in his premature old age ; and there was a film, a mist, a nameless terror, darkening his mind. His nights were sleepless, and his days fuller of poisoned thoughts. He was like a man smitten with disease, who counts the moments of his fleeting life by the sickly throbbing of his pulse.

Hester was only partly aware of this aggravation of her father's malady. She had more to think of than in the days when she had him alone to study. There was Rose, and there was Annie, who was more warmly cultivating her friendship. Carl, too, claimed a large share of her thoughts. Nor was Robert Waldron forgotten ; that would have been impossible. The recollection of him crossed her mind often, and always with a pensive tinge of sadness, which did not amount to sorrow or regret yet

which borrowed a shade from both. Carl was gone away, without speaking any sure words of love, and she saw him no more. Robert had paid to her the greatest and deepest homage by which any man can testify his devotion; and it is not in the nature of a woman to hate or despise the man who truly loves her, whatever may be the character of his faults. He was still at Aston Court. She had seen him, and he had seen her twice, as he was passing Grant's house, and looked up to its windows. She heard very much of him through Lawson's mother. He looked pale and suffering; Madame assured her that he was desolated. Amongst her many other thoughts Hester gave a place, a poor paltry place, Robert would have considered it, to him. It was impossible he should ever rival Carl; but for very pity's sake, and because with Rose always in her mind he could not be far off, Hester often thought of Robert Waldron.

To Robert himself, the departure of Carl and the assurance of Madame Lawson that he had not proposed for Hester, brought a new hope. He knew the flatteries and adulations, so difficult to resist, which would wrap about Carl



upon his introduction into the religious world of London; and he trusted somewhat to their seductions to make him forgetful of the grave, quiet girl at Little Aston. If Carl only withdrew from the field, he could not believe that she would persist in choosing poverty, and debt, and the increasing difficulties of her position, to the bright future he had to offer. He possessed the faculty of burying in oblivion what he did not wish to remember; and he had forgotten the singular solemnity of Hester's rejection of his suit. The fact that she had refused him remained in his memory only as being possibly the caprice of a girl, under Carl's ascendancy. He blamed his father for hurrying him into a premature avowal, which would have been better timed by being deferred a little; but his withered hope bloomed again. There would be need of still more delicate management than before; but after all, in spite of all, his little Hetty should one day be mistress of Aston Court.

"What news of Little Aston?" asked Robert of Grant, one evening, with the carelessness of a man to whom so small a place could yield no news of any interest.

"John Morley is dangerously ill," answered Grant, very gravely.

"Ill! good God!" cried Robert, "what will become of Hester?"

"He is not beyond hope yet," said Grant, "and I shall do my utmost to save him; but his constitution is terribly weakened. To my knowledge, he has never turned the corner of the street since I have been here, except once to see Carl."

"Is he in bed?" asked Robert.

"To be sure, and the shop shut up altogether," he answered. "It has never done him any good; he is about as fit for business as you are. The place looks more dismal than ever; what with that room which is never opened, where the shutters are falling to pieces,—"

"What room?" inquired Robert, as Grant hesitated.

"Oh, a drawing-room or something," he added, "which they say is never opened. But I am in a hurry. I promised Hester to sit up with her father to-night."

Grant left Robert with fresh food for thought. He knew very little personally of the man whom he had injured; years ago he had been

Rose's husband, now he was Hester's father. The news of his illness affected him chiefly as it touched his own purposes. He was soon considering Hester's position should her father die, and how it would affect him. He flattered himself that Hester's reluctance to receive his suit arose partly from regard to her father; but his death would remove this stumbling-block; nay, might become a stepping-stone to the attainment of his end. She would be left homeless, penniless, and friendless; and it was incredible to suppose that she would again refuse the lot he would offer her. In his idle and luxurious worldliness, he could not comprehend the possibility of Hester choosing rather a life of difficulty and trial than his own lot of untroubled abundance of all things.

He had strolled on unthinkingly until he reached the entrance of the town, just as the clock of the old church struck ten. The streets lay before him, with lights twinkling fitfully in many of the windows. There would be no danger now in walking once again under the walls of Hester's home. He passed on to it, with the impatient swiftness of one who has been long denied a pleasure. The gloom of

the evening was deeper there, for the street was narrow and the houses high on each side. He crossed over to the opposite causeway, and looked up to the second storey. He had done so often in the old times to see if any light shone in Rose's pleasant sitting-room; but the shutters of that window were closed. In the next casement, however, glimmered a wan and sickly gleam, the beacon of illness, the pale watch-fire, where Hester, solitary and uncomfortable, kept watch over the inroads of death. Why did his treacherous fancy mingle the images of Hester and Rose? He had diligently rooted from his memory all unpleasant and disquieting reminiscences. Yet now, standing in the dark, opposite the house, and looking up to the windows, he felt himself the boy he had been eleven years ago. A boy only. He caught again the oft repeated apology for the past. It was as a boy he had loved and tempted Rose; it was as a man he loved and honoured Hester.

He stood in the quiet street some minutes, no passer-by coming to disturb him. At length he heard the sound of approaching footsteps, and felt that it was time to move on. He

traversed the whole length of the street, and then retraced his steps past John Morley's door. Was he in a dream to-night? Was he the boy of three-and-twenty; or the man thirty-four years of age, weary, disenchanted, with a pricking goad in his conscience which he could not altogether pluck out? To see Hester, only for a moment, would allay this fever of his spirit; and what would be more natural than for him to testify his concern for her, and her father? There could be neither harm nor danger in simply knocking at the door, and asking the servant how John Morley was. Perhaps Hester herself might answer his knock; as he could remember her doing once many years before. He called back her image to his mind; a grave, sweet, simple child, who hailed his coming with a demure rapture of delight. If he had only foreseen into what a womanhood this childhood was about to expand! With a profound sigh, Robert Waldron set his foot upon John Morley's threshold, and knocked a low uncertain knock at his door.




## CHAPTER II.

### *ON THE OTHER SIDE.*

WHEN Rose Morley heard of her husband's dangerous illness, she implored Hester to suffer her to see him at once, lest he should die without forgiving her. But his malady was more of the mind than the body, and Grant forbade any kind of agitation for him. John Morley's brain was at work with too busy and too perilous an activity. He was neither insensible nor delirious ; but from hour to hour his thoughts were flashing, with lightning speed, over all the events of his past life ; and his tongue, so long reticent, read aloud the secret records. It was a fever, but not a fever of the blood. The spirit, long kept in check, was at last avenging itself upon its tyrant. John Morley, lying almost motionless upon his bed, with his meagre face and burning eyes turned towards the listener at his side, poured out restlessly the pent-up emotions of his years of silence.

To speak to him of Rose, in this strange



fire and fever of his memory, would have been madness. The only persons he admitted near to him were Hester and Lawson; and to them his tongue ran on fast of all his love to her, and of all the torture of despair and shame he had suffered for her. Her name was always upon his lips. There was something of a solemn humiliation in this spectacle of a soul, forced at last to make itself known to some other human soul. Neither Hester nor Lawson answered him, and he did not need an answer. The fire within him was consuming him until he spoke with his lips; that was all. They had only to stand by and listen.

It was difficult to Hester to turn from her father to Rose with gentleness. She began to question whether the sin she had committed did not shut her out from all claim to her husband's pardon. When Rose demanded an entrance to his room, with an importunity almost angry, she replied by telling her all that her father had said. Until that moment Rose had not felt the fulness of the wrong she had inflicted upon a nature like John Morley's. She could scarcely hope any more; but she would minister to him afar off, and Hester,

sorry for her in her heart, gave her permission to help in the additional labour of the house.

The servant was gone to bed, and Rose was sitting up by the kitchen fire, waiting to let in Grant, when Robert Waldron's low knock reached her ear. She was scarcely afraid of being recognised now; especially in the dim light kept burning in the entrance. Yet she crept slowly and tremblingly to the door, and paused with her fingers upon the handle before turning it. Who could it be on the other side? And what errand brought them there? It was not Grant, for he was to have tapped softly on the window, lest the patient should have fallen asleep. Her heart throbbed, and her lips felt dry. But she fancied the person outside was about to give a second knock, and she threw the door open quickly and fully.

For a minute or two Rose Morley and Robert Waldron stood face to face in silence, feeling as if they had met in another world. Yet it was the old place, the door she had opened to him so often, the threshold he had crossed with guilty feet. There was the difference only 'twixt now and then; but the wofulness of the change was in Rose. He stood there, still handsome, almost

young, with the air and mien of a man with whom all the world was pleased ; and she confronted him, motionless, nearly lifeless, a faded withered woman, bowed down with the world's censure. He closed his eyelids as if to shut out a vision so repugnant to him ; but Rose, with eyes that would not blench, gazed steadfastly and mournfully into his face.

"Hush !" she whispered, in a guilty tone, and with a gesture of silence, such as she might have used in the former days, "he is sleeping perhaps. Follow me softly. There is nobody to see you."

He would have given worlds to escape from this interview, yet he had no power to resist. He followed her reluctantly, watching her now with keen eyes, which would not allow him to pass over any change in her. It was the same Rose, but with no more bloom or sweetness. The poor emaciated hand was trembling, the face was marked and sallow, the slender and graceful figure meagre and bent. Her eyes only were the eyes of Rose, though their deep blue was troubled with shame. She was leading him through the house, and across the court, when the flame of the candle she carried

flickered in the wind ; he could see how transparent her hand was as she curved it round the flame. Where could she be taking him ? He climbed a steep staircase after her, and the light fell upon the swarthy leaves of ivy about the door ; and then he remembered the melancholy little room opposite Hester's window, which had once oppressed and fascinated his attention. Had Rose been in the house at the time when John Morley nearly murdered him ? Was it possible that she had even then been concealed so near to him, in a refuge of which he could never have dreamed ?

This refuge was a mere, bare, comfortless cell in his eyes. The poor pieces of furniture, provided by Hester with so much difficulty, looked mean and scanty. The two chairs, the table, the pallet-bed, a book or two upon the narrow window-sill, a basket of work,—this was all the room contained. The walls were dark with smoke, and the low roof was not ceiled. There was not a loft over the stables at Aston Court which was not better fitted for a human dwelling than this. Yet this was the poor shelter to which Rose Morley had been brought—by him.

He had not spoken yet ; he could not speak.

Could this monstrous dream be by any chance a reality? His conscience also was so diligently at work among the records of the past, turning back to old leaves which had long since been pressed down, that he was unconscious of his own dumbness before this awful apparition of his first love. If she had kept silence, he would have sat mute for hours, gazing at her in blank bewilderment.

"You have found me out," she murmured at last, in a voice of fear, "and there is no help for me but to throw myself upon your mercy. Do not drive me from here; do not betray me. Nobody knows I am here, except Hester and Carl Bramwell. If you ever had any love for me, leave me here in peace."

"Here!" he repeated, casting round the place a glance of disgust.

"Yes, here," she added, vehemently. "Why, it is a hundred times better than the place to which I might have fallen through you. Do you know who has saved me and gives me now this refuge? It is Hester. But for the remembrance of her, the good little child I had forsaken, I might have fallen lower than I did. I owe all to Hester, my little Hetty."

Her voice, broken and trembling, fell into sobs, until she could speak no more. The name of Hester brought Robert back to the present, and his deep absorbing love for her, so widely different to his fitful and poisoned passion for Rose. What influence had her presence there upon Hester with regard to him?

"How long have you been here?" he asked, in lowered tones, as if afraid of being overheard. "I have sought for you everywhere. I could not endure to think of you in poverty, without a home, and without friends. Why did you never let me know where you were? It was cruel to me."

Still thinking of himself, he asked this last question in a tone of so much tenderness, that Rose trembled and flushed a little. A last gleam of the good-tempered vanity of her girlish days flashed across her saddened heart.

"Why have you never married, Robert?" she asked. "I could have been happier and more contented if you had been married. Have you never loved any one—" but me? she would have added, but her lips only moved, no sound came through them.

"Yes," he answered, briefly; "I have loved."

"And would she not marry you?" asked Rose, as soon as the spark of jealousy which his words had kindled had died away. "Is it possible that any woman could say No to you?"

"I love Hester," he said again, with the short sharp utterance of one in great anguish of mind.

"Hester!" she echoed, "Hester!"

She could say no more; but she sat silent for a few minutes, thinking of what might have been had she but resisted temptation eleven years before. She saw herself John Morley's honoured and happy wife, the wife of a prosperous and happy man, the mother of Hester, about to become the mistress of Aston Court. A phantasmagoria of brilliant scenes, in which she played a prominent part, passed before her. The life that would have been but for her sin, was a hundred-fold better suited to her than the one she had chosen for herself.

"Oh, Robert!" she cried. "What can be done?"

"Nothing!" he said, in an accent of bitterness and despair; "nothing! I know now that



Hester could no more love me than an angel could come down from heaven to me. How could she, having you before her eyes?"

He had almost told her that his chief hope had been to discover that she was dead, but he stopped himself in time. It was not in his nature to hate her, as some men hate the woman they have fancied they loved. He was sorry for her, but he was still more sorry for himself.

"Robert," said Rose, "we neither of us knew what we were doing, when we sinned against a man like John Morley. It has been well-nigh the death of his soul, as well as mine. But I think now, I am a better woman than I was then. Look away from me, look away from me. I wish to tell you what I think God has done for me, and I cannot bear your eyes to look into mine while I speak of Him."

She was silent again for a moment or two, sitting before him, with bended head and closed eyelids, as if searching into her own soul with a keen and unsparing scrutiny. His eyes were riveted upon her in spite of her appeal. A feeble smile played once more about her pale lips, and her eye-brows expanded as if

some pleasant thought had come to her amid all the pitiless shame and trouble of her interview with him. She was once more something like the Rose he had known.

"I believe," she said, softly and solemnly, "that He has forgiven my sin, for the sake of His Son. I believe that when the woman, who was a sinner, stood at the feet of Jesus, weeping and washing His feet with her tears, He saw me there; and it was of me, as well as of her, He said, 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven.' I believe that."

She raised her eyes to him, with a serene and hopeful light in their blue depths. Yet even as he dared to look into them for a moment, the tears came across them and dimmed them.

"But my husband," she said, "does not forgive me. He has treasured up all our sins, and now he is counting them over one by one, while he is perhaps dying. Do you know that he recollects each day as if it were only a week ago, and he keeps on saying, 'On such a morning he came here, and I heard Rose singing to him in the drawing-room;' or 'Such a night I found him here when I came home from

chapel.' Oh, it is horrible! He must hate us with a terrible hatred. If he should be lost, it is you and I who have brought his soul to ruin."

"No, no. He is a good man," muttered Robert.

"He was a good man," she continued mournfully. "He was so good himself that he thought no evil of you or me, though he took so much notice of all we did. But all these years our crime has come between him and God. Do you suppose he would not have rejoiced in your death or mine? They say he was almost guilty of murder. And now he is going to die!"

"He is not going to die, my poor Rose," said Robert.

"I wish I could die for him!" she exclaimed. "I should not be sorry to die. It would be well for me to be out of the world altogether."

There was a passion of mournful pathos in her words, and Robert Waldron could have cast himself at her feet, and hiding his face in her lap, have given way to an agony of grief and repentance. It was true that he had not known till now what he had done. Till this moment he had not seen the blackness of his

transgression. At times, when he had been himself low-spirited, or when the even tenor of his comfort and well-being had been infringed, he had experienced what he had been pleased to call repentance. But it was now, looking at Rose and thinking of John Morley counting over his wrongs perhaps in the very hour of death, that his real remorse began. There stole a subtle and fine sense of his speechless anguish over Rose.

"I thought never to let you know," she said, "but now I see you again—it must be for the last time—I cannot help telling you. I have a child."

"A child!" he repeated.

"Yes," she said, believing she was giving him the only consolation in her power. "You shall see her some day. I thought you should never, never know; but perhaps it would be wrong to keep her all to myself. She thinks her father is dead and in heaven; you must never tell her different. She is about as old as Hester was when I was married. You remember little Hetty?"


Remember her! He had done nothing else these months past. There was no consolation

or relief in the thought of their child to him as there was to Rose; it only deepened the heavy cloud which hung over him.

"I have called her Hester," said Rose, after a pause, for he had not answered her last question. Robert bowed his face upon his hands and groaned. This then was the Hester who was to belong to him,—his own child, who was never to know him as her father. But for Hester Morley, grave and gentle and sweet, with all the simple grace which satisfied his taste, the innocent and saintly soul which would have helped him to save his own unstable soul,—this Hester was lost to him for ever by an irrevocable forfeit.

"My punishment is greater than I can bear," he cried, bitterly.

"No," she said, "your punishment is not so great as mine. Think of it. You are rich and honoured, and no one casts a stone at you; while I am a beggar at my husband's door, and he does not know that I am fed by his hand. If he knew, he would fling me as a worthless thing into the street, where every one who passed by would revile me. Yet I think our sin was equal. But I don't know. No; it was



more evil in me than in you. Let my punishment remain. I deserve it all."

Robert Waldron scarcely heard her. The sound of her words passed through his brain without making any impression there. This woman beside him, who had laid her thin chilly fingers upon his hand, had but a small share in his thoughts. He could no longer endure her presence. He must be alone to taste, drop by drop, the dregs of the bitter cup which he had first tasted hastily in his youth. He rose abruptly and said that he must leave her.

"It is the last time you will ever see me," said Rose, calmly.


"No," he answered; "we must see one another again."

"You do not know what you say," she added. "There is peril in this house for you and for me. It will never happen again that we can meet as we have done now."

She had opened the door, and was holding the light while he prepared to descend the crazy staircase, so shading it with her hand that the rays fell upon him and the steps he had to tread upon, while her own face was in shadow. She glanced round the sombre court for an

instant. A light shone in Hester's window opposite, and the face of Lawson pressed eagerly against the panes, watching Robert making his slow and cautious descent. But he had not seen *her* yet. With a smothered cry of dismay she let the candle fall from her trembling hold, and hurrying on down the familiar staircase, she put her hand upon Robert's arm, and led him in darkness and silence through the house and into the street beyond. "We have been seen," she whispered, at the door. "I do not know what may come of it. Only I would rather die here in my husband's house, than be cast out once more into the world."

He was about to answer her, to utter some words more pitiful and gentle than any that had fallen from his lips during their interview; but Rose drew back and closed the door once more between them. He did not suppose there would be all the difficulty and danger she imagined in seeing her again; but dismissing her easily from his thoughts, he went home, mindful only of Hester and the child that bore her name, with a heart so heavy that it seemed impossible for the weight to be lifted from it by any event of the future.



## CHAPTER III.

### *A FRUITLESS EFFORT.*

JOHN MORLEY'S illness though dangerous was not of long duration, and he appeared to recover from it perfectly. But the deep fountains of his trouble had been stirred too greatly to subside quickly into their former monotony and stillness. He grew restless and unquiet; the disquietude of a man who is looking for some event to change completely, either for good or ill, the current of his life. In vain Hester sought to soothe this strange mood. Grant bade her desist from all effort to do so. It was, he said, a crisis in his mind's history, from which he might come out a new man, with a hale and happy old age lying before him. There was nothing for them to do but stand aside, and look on at the strange conflict.

"Hester," said John Morley, one evening just before sunset, "bring me my hat. I am going out for a walk."

Hester could scarcely conceal her surprise, but she brought him his hat without venturing



a word of comment. He stepped across his threshold, with a dizzy sense of bewilderment, and turned his steps mechanically towards the chapel, feeling his way before him with his stick as if he were blind. The wind played in his long white hair, and breathed coolly upon his fevered face, for there was still a low subtle fever burning in his veins. At the chapel porch, where the doors were closed, he arrested himself, and stood upon the lowest step, looking about him with an air of confusion and questioning. What had he come here for? What was he doing? Where was he going?

He remained just within the portico for some minutes. He had come to the end of the bound he had set for himself and kept to during many years. Beyond this limit, he could just catch a glimpse of trees, with their green branches waving and beckoning to him with gestures of welcome. He saw the level sunbeams burnishing richly the topmost leaves, and the evening song of the birds reached his ear. He reared his bended figure, and lifted up his snow-white head. Had he been blind and deaf to these things, and was he now going to hear and see once more? Was the invisible

Christ touching with a divine finger his ears, his eyes, and saying, "Be open"? Was the hand of Christ about to loose his burden, and take it away from him for ever?

He felt the wooing of the gilded branches and the singing of the birds through every nerve; but he could not break through the unseen barrier stretching between him and them, which he had himself erected in his despair. Until this hour he had not wished to pass beyond it. There was the lost paradise, but he had never turned longing eyes upon the cherubim and the flaming sword which kept the gates. He did so now; he desired ardently to cross the boundary; but whenever he thought of quitting the familiar portico, his feeble limbs trembled, and his sight grew dim. He wished he had brought Hester with him, that he might have leaned upon her arm, and gathered courage from the tender serenity of her face. The passers-by stared curiously at him; but they were few, and did not long interrupt his thoughts. Yet he grew ashamed of being seen there; and when some children turned riotously out of the court opposite, he resolved to retrace his steps homeward.

He said never a word to Hester when he re-entered ; but he went back to his old arm-chair and set a book open before him, and ran his paper-knife along the lines, as if, like a child, it was needful to keep the place where he was reading by pointing to it. The depths had closed over him again, after parting and giving him a brief glance of something brighter rising above them. He was laid once more in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deeps.

What his eyes read he did not know, though the lamp lighted up the page clearly. Hester went in and out, uttering no word to disturb him ; but at last he felt her hand upon his shoulder, and he raised his dim despairing face to hers. Her eyelids were red with many tears, and her lips trembled as she spoke very slowly and distinctly, as though what she was about to say would astonish and perplex him.

" Father," she said, " do you think you could do without me for a day or two ? I must go to London."

" To London !" he repeated, yet with no more than a vague listless surprise, amounting almost to indifference, in his manner.

" Yes," she replied. " I cannot tell you why

now, but you shall know some day. Carl has written for me to go there quickly. I must go to-morrow morning."

Her abrupt sentences were spoken with difficulty and deliberation, but he scarcely noticed her agitation. He always left Hester to her own judgment, and he did not think of demanding any explanation from her. The authority of a father over a daughter had never been assumed by him, and he had no energy to assume it now.

"I shall see Carl there, perhaps," she said, as if to reassure herself and him; "but I shall come home on Monday. I must be at home again on Monday. To-morrow is Saturday, you know, so there will be only Sunday between. I have given Jane all the directions she needs, and Lawson's mother will come down to stay with her. You will not see either of them. It will be exactly the same as if I was here, only I shall be away."

She spoke, however, in a tone of much trouble and anxiety, and her eyes wore a look of uncertainty.

"I am going to see some one who is ill," she continued, and John Morley shrank painfully

from her. "You are willing for me to go? You can trust me to do what is right? You will say, 'God bless you, and go with you'?"

"Ah!" he answered, putting his arm round her neck, and drawing down her face to his, "I could trust you with my own soul, Hester. Do what seems good in your sight, and God bless you and be with you always, my daughter."

"Father," she said eagerly, "I wish I dare tell you all now. Is there anything I must not speak of yet?"

He fell back from her again, holding up his hand, with a gesture of terror. He knew well how he had poured out his heart before her during his illness, but he had drawn into himself once more; and he could not bear to listen to any reference to the past from her lips.

"Spare me," he entreated, "at least to-day. When you come back,—when you have been to London and seen her, perhaps then—if she is dead—you may tell me all."

Again Hester hesitated. She longed to disburden her mind of the secret which had weighed heavier since Carl left, but she dared not. She saw that her father believed her journey to London was to see Rose, and to see

her as one about to die ; and yet there was no softening of his voice or face as he spoke of her. It would be impossible to confess the whole to him at the very moment when she was about to be absent from home. She must wait till the right time came for her to give him the explanation she had promised. Her absence would be but a short one; it could be but short, for there was urgent need for her constant presence at home.

## CHAPTER IV.

### *ALONE IN LONDON.*

THE cause of Hester's hurried journey to London, was a letter which she had received from Carl, telling her of the existence of Rose's child, who had lately broken a blood-vessel, and was lying in a dangerous condition in her dreary school-home. True to the large pity and tenderness of her nature, Hester at once resolved to go up to London without inflicting this additional pang upon Rose, and see for herself what could be done for the forlorn little creature. The train by which she travelled left Little Aston at midday, but did not reach London until the evening. She had provided herself with the address of a boarding-house kept by a former inhabitant of Little Aston, and had decided to go to it at once for the night. She had Carl's address also, but she could not go to him though her heart sank a little when she found herself alone at the entrance of the busy terminus, with a maze of streets stretching before her. It was Saturday evening, and her


unexpected appearance at that hour would embarrass him and disturb his thoughts, set upon the subjects of to-morrow's sermons. To save Carl the mere chance of feeling her presence a distraction, she was willing to encounter any difficulties herself. Besides, she was in the same place with him ; and she had no idea of the extent of the overgrown city. He might be dwelling in any one of these houses which she was passing, and it might be that his eye would fall upon her, if he chanced to look out through his study-window.

This thought caused Hester to slacken her quick footsteps, and to tread the crowded pavements with more leisure,—the leisure of a half-born hope. From time to time she inquired the way, and found herself more and more entangled in the busy streets. To call a cab would have been simply impossible to the country girl. But as long as the light lasted her pleasant thought remained. Twilight would draw Carl to his window to catch the last rays of day. Carl loved the dusk. But then she looked round to see what twilight and dusk were in the streets of London. The lamps were already lit, but there was a thick dark-



ness gathering in the big streets, where their shadows flitted to and fro, which gave her a vague, oppressive perception of the vastness of the place, of the myriads of human souls closely surrounding her, of the great heart of anguish throbbing in the bosom of the city. Hester felt her own heart heaving with a troubled and mysterious sympathy. The tears smarted under her eyelids; and now that Carl's eye could not recognise her in the growing darkness, she drew her veil over her face and quickened her wearied footsteps.

She reached her destination safely, but worn-out and foot-sore. It was a dingy house in one of those old inns which have now disappeared from Holborn. She entered under a deep archway, shut in at night by large doors and kept by a watchman. Solemn silence reigned inside, and the sky lay low and flat across the roofs of the buildings, which rose to four and five storeys. The watchman pointed out the house she wanted, and in a few minutes Hester was received and welcomed with something more than the usual hospitality of a lodging-house landlady. A guest from Little Aston, as she announced herself, in trembling accents, was



always doubly acceptable; and very soon she felt more at home than she could have believed possible.

The school where Carl had told her Rose's little girl lived was in a street leading off from Oxford Street; and Carl's chapel lay beyond, near Hyde Park. Hester lay awake almost all night thinking over her plans, and listening to the solemn boom and hum of the great clock of St. Paul's sounding through the stillness, which seemed to her at last to have fallen over the turmoil of the city. She set out again early in the morning, with minute directions from her landlady. Her rigorous sense of the sanctity of the Sabbath, which was kept with puritanic preciseness by the church at Little Aston, prohibited her entering any conveyance which would have carried her part of the distance. It was, too, an early hour of Sunday morning, one of the quietest hours that ever falls upon those weary streets; and Hester felt a kind of enjoyment in her novel position—alone in London, and yet near to Carl.

She reached, after a long walk, the street and the house she sought. It was a dull, dirty dwelling, with the words, "Ladies' Seminary,"

upon the wire blinds of the windows in the second floor. It looked a melancholy place to inclose a child's life; yet it was not more melancholy than the home where she had grown up. Her memory ran rapidly over the past, and her heart melted with tenderness towards the child, who had known the same loneliness and the same desertion from which she had suffered, with the dumb sufferings of childhood. She saw a servant moving about in the underground kitchen, and Hester bent down to the half-open window, and called to her softly. The girl looked out with the weary air of a person who had been sitting up all night, and came to the area steps.

"You have a child here," she said, "who is very ill. Can you let me see her?"

"I don't know," said the girl, with the caution of a town servant. "Where do you come from?"

"From the country," answered Hester; "a gentleman who comes to see her often, sent for me. His name is Bramwell."

"All right!" said the girl; "he promised to send a nurse, or somebody."

She eyed Hester scrutinizingly, nodded her

approbation, and then ascending to the street door, admitted her into a narrow passage.

"How is she?" whispered Hester.

"Oh, she'll die!" answered the girl. "If she don't die, I don't know anything about dying; and I've seen three of my own sisters go out like the snuff of a candle. And such a dear little thing as she is, so loving and patient! I've sat up with her all night, and there's nobody belonging to her to be with her at the last. I don't know whatever the world is made of, or what it was made for, or where we are all going to."

"Dying!" exclaimed Hester.

"Yes," she said, vehemently; "and nobody takes any notice, and nobody believes me. They can't bear the trouble and bother of her dying, and they are afraid of it injuring the school; so they just shut their eyes to it. They'll be pretty well taken to when she does die."

"I should like to go to her at once," said Hester, with a sob.

"You can come, and you'll be all by yourselves, I promise you, this morning," she replied; "the young ladies nor my mistress don't get

up on a Sunday till it is near time to go to church. Mr. Bramwell said he'd send you ; and I'm glad you've come, if nobody else is."

She led the way up two dark flights of stairs, and into a small room at the back of the house. It was almost filled up by a large canopy four-post bedstead, with heavy moreen hangings ; lying upon which was the small spare form of a child, with its meagre face and bright eyes turned anxiously towards the door. The forlornness of this little creature, dying alone and unloved, her very death unnoticed, smote Hester to the heart ; and she sank down beside the bed, and hid her face from the searching and unquiet eyes of Rose Morley's desolate child.

"It's a good kind nurse as Mr. Bramwell has sent," said the servant ; "she's going to read the Bible and pray for you, my poor dear. She'll stay all the morning with you, while I'm busy ; and you must ask her for anything you want."

"I don't want anything," answered the plaintive voice of the child ; and Hester raised her head to look into the white face. There was a profound serenity and patience in it ; a look almost of satisfaction. She smiled faintly at

Hester, and stretched out her thin fingers to touch her forehead.

"You can go away now, please," she said to the servant; "and then she will begin to read and talk to me."

Hester listened to the servant's retreating steps, and then she lay down beside the child, and took her fondly and gently into her arms.

"I am come instead of your mother," she said, with difficulty restraining her tears; "you may talk to me as if I were your mother."

"Do you know my mother?" she asked.

"Oh, very well indeed, my darling," answered Hester; falling by instinct into the caressing tone and manner of a tender-hearted woman towards a child, though she had had nothing to do with any child before. "Why, she lives with me down at Little Aston; and perhaps some day you may come too, and be my little sister. It will all be as God pleases; He knows best."

"Yes," said the child, smiling; "of course He knows best. But sometimes I think if He'd only let me and my mother live together! I've lived at school all my life, and I've only seen her for a day or two, now and then. Do you know why we could not live together?"

"She was very poor," said Hester, "and she had to work very hard for herself and you."

"And my father must have been very poor, too," continued the feeble voice. "I don't think anybody else in the school was ever so poor, for they all have holidays, and I never have. The girls used to tell me such things they'd done, when they came back to school. Did you used to have holidays?"

"I never went to school," answered Hester.

"Never went to school!" she repeated, raising her feeble head a little to look into Hester's face. "How happy you must have been! But I've been at school all my life; and now I think God will let me go to have my holidays with the other children who are dead. There is a verse somewhere, about the streets being full of little children playing. What do you cry for, dear? I don't know what to call you. What is your name?"

"Hester," she replied, pressing her lips upon the little hand. The child's blue eyes glistened, and her mouth quivered with surprise and delight.

"Why, that is my name!" she cried. "You never can be the good Hester, the dear, beauti-

ful Hester I'm called after ! Oh, are you that Hester ? My mother used to cry ever so when she talked about her. Are you the very same Hester ?”

“ Yes, my darling little Hester,” she sobbed ; “ I was her little girl once.”

“ Then we are both Hesters !” said the little girl, with a playful smile. “ How droll that is ! Are we alike in anything else, I wonder ? How old are you ?”

“ I am ten years older than you,” she answered.

“ And perhaps you will live to be very old, and I shall die soon,” said the child ; “ no, we are not alike in anything else. Are we alike, big Hester ?”

“ Yes ; I used to be a very lonely little girl like you,” said Hester, pitifully ; “ nobody ever used to nurse me or play with me like other children. My mother was dead.”

“ Had you a live father ?” asked little Hester.

“ Yes,” she answered.

“ Then we are not alike in that,” went on the child ; “ I never had a father. He died before ever I was born. If he had been alive he would have worked and worked and worked to



get money that we might not be so very poor, and for me to have some holidays. Did you know my father, Hester ?”

“ Dear child, yes !” she murmured, sadly.

“ Oh, tell me about him. Tell me what he was like. My mother always cried if I spoke about him ever. I dream of him so often ; every night now, I think. Do you think he will know me in heaven ?”

“ Your Father in heaven will know you,” answered Hester.

“ Yes, God,” said little Hester, with a simple confidence. “ I shall see Him and know Him. But shall I see my father who was my father here ?”

“ My darling,” she replied, “ it will be all as God chooses for us.”

She nestled down contentedly for some time in Hester’s arms ; not sleeping, for her eyes were wide open, but with a restfulness more full of pleasure than sleep. But after a while she stirred again, and took off her white cap, letting her hair loose about her face. It was soft brown hair, cut short, but curling naturally in small shining rings.

“ You shall cut some off,” she said ; “ I want

to give them away. There are some scissors on the table."

She watched the curls drop off one by one upon the quilt, and twisted them round her languid fingers.

"Such a funny thing!" she said, looking up with shining eyes. "I was just thinking how my father would like one of them. There's one for my mother, and one for Mr. Bramwell, and one for you; only three little curls to give away! Some of the girls have uncles and aunts and grandfathers, as well as their own father and mother and brothers and sisters. How I should have liked to have them all; and how I would have loved them! Are you any relation to me, Hester?"

"Not exactly, my darling," she said.

"Did you love my father when you knew him?" she asked.

"When I was as old as you, I loved him very much," answered Hester, with a faltering voice; "he used to read to me sometimes while I sat on his knee."

"But he never nursed me on his knee!" cried the child, with a sudden passion of tears. "He never saw me, and we never knew one another."

She wept bitterly for some time, leaning against Hester, who soothed her with fond words and caresses, until she grew calm again, and lay down upon the pillow exhausted, with her face as white as the cover upon which it rested.

"Tell me what he was like, while I lie quiet," she whispered, almost inaudibly.

"He was tall, and very handsome," said Hester.

"Very handsome," repeated his little daughter, with lips that could scarcely speak.

"And he had a very pleasant voice," continued Hester.

"A very pleasant voice," echoed the child's faint tones.

"Oh, my darling!" cried Hester, "I cannot tell you any more. Be quiet now. You will hurt yourself by talking."

"The doctor told me I wasn't to talk at all," she said; "but I can't help talking to you. I like to hear your voice speaking. You shall read to me, if you please."

Hester read to her in soft low tones for some time, until she fell asleep, holding her hand fast. By-and-by there came in the lady of the house,

a tall, gaunt, weary-looking woman, with all the airs and affectations of the mistress of a cheap boarding-school. She acknowledged Hester's presence by a stiff curtsy, and stood at the foot of the bed regarding the child with an air of cold anxiety.

"What do you think of her?" she asked in a low voice.

"I think she will never get well," whispered Hester, with tears in her eyes.

"Dear! dear! But that is very trying," she replied; "especially in a school. The parents might think it was measles or small-pox. She must be taken away at once."

"I will speak to Mr. Bramwell about it," said Hester. "To-night I shall go to his chapel, and then I shall see him. She shall be removed to-morrow, if possible."

"Is there no immediate danger?" she asked.

"I should think not," answered Hester; "but the doctor will tell you when he comes."

When he came, the doctor, who was merely a young medical assistant to an older man, gave it as his opinion that the child might rally and live through the summer, but would certainly "be cut off" at the approach of winter.

Hester stayed beside her all day, and only in the evening left her in order to go to Carl's chapel, which was about two miles away. As she stooped over to kiss her, the little Hester put her arm feebly round her neck and looked up beseechingly into her eyes.

"You will not be away long," she murmured; "you are sure to come back?"

"I am sure to come back very soon," she said; "and perhaps I shall bring Mr. Bramwell back with me. You are fond of him?"

"Oh, very fond," whispered the child.

## CHAPTER V.

### *THEN AND NOW.*

ALL the day, after Hester's departure, John Morley suffered under an access of morbid and despairing thoughts. The stillness of his home was more profound than ever, now that he had lost the soft footstep of his daughter moving about his room, and her low caressing voice speaking to him from time to time. Lawson entered the room once, after knocking loudly at the door and receiving no answer ; he found his master lying half across his desk, so absorbed in reverie as to be unconscious of his presence, until he touched him on the shoulder. Then he lifted up his face, greyer and more haggard than ever, with eyes burning more deeply in their sockets, while his head trembled as if with palsy. It was the last interruption but one which broke in upon his melancholy memories.

This other interruption was the entrance of the young maid-servant, who, with a tearful face, came to tell her master that a brother of hers was coming home to pay his last visit

there, before emigrating to America. If he could only spare her till Monday evening, Lawson's mother had promised to look after the house and wait upon him. John Morley said "Go," almost impatiently. It signified nothing to him who performed the small services he required.

Madame Lawson had promised Hester to go about nine o'clock, or a little later, after her son's comfort had been provided for; and to stay all night and the next day in John Morley's house. The girl wanted to leave at four, and it seemed but a small thing to her to ask the poor woman her mistress gave a shelter to, to fill up the space between her own departure and the arrival of Madame Lawson. She asked Rose boldly; and Rose seized the chance with the passionate eagerness of one who has long waited for the moment when they can do something, anything, for their beloved. She would have waited upon John Morley, upon this white-headed, poverty-stricken, deserted husband, on bended knees, with deep abasement and trembling devotion. But all her duties would be to prepare his tea, and summon him to it, keeping herself unseen. She stole upstairs with a noise-

less step, into his chamber, and arranged the bed again, which had been roughly and hastily done by the servant, making it as soft and full of comfort as tender hands could make it. Then she looked out the clothes he would need for the Sunday, lingering over her work with a frightened ecstasy. When the hour for tea came, she set the tray and his chair near the fire, in a room adjoining his sitting-room, and put his slippers on the hearth. Would he need anything she had not placed upon the table, and ring for her, so giving her some chance of hearing his voice, and looking furtively into his face? Whether she dreaded or hoped for this most she could not tell, while she stood at the kitchen door, with her hands pressed against her heart, as she listened to his movements about the other room. But he did not ring; and, after a brief meal time she heard him go back to his own sitting-room. He remained there till seven o'clock, when he went out to attend some meeting at the chapel.

She was alone in her own house now, quite alone. She could venture into John Morley's desolate parlour which she had seen so often from without. How well she remembered the



old days passed in it! Here was the carpet she had chosen herself, faded and threadbare, with one long, narrow, bare strip, which his feet had worn in his restless paces to and fro, The scarlet baize she had nailed with brass nails along the edge of the bookshelves, in order to brighten up the dingy rows of books, was a deep dull red now, and the nails no longer glistened in the fire-light. She began to wonder how the room overhead would look; her room, which she had locked up herself, and the key of which was still safe in her keeping. She knew herself to be absolutely alone, with no fear of interruption for another hour to come. Lingered for a few minutes in a tremor of nervous hesitation, she could not succeed in shaking off the feverish desire to see it once again, during this absence of Hester, which made it possible to do so. She flew back to her refuge, and sought for the key at the bottom of the box which held her scanty possessions. It had accompanied her in all her wanderings,—this key which she had turned upon the paradise she despised, and could never more re-enter. She hastened with it—for her time was not long—up the staircase again, which she had

so often trodden with a light step and lighter heart ; past Hester's little room, so severe, so simple, so bare of all the common luxuries of girlhood ; past her husband's chamber. Beyond stood the door which no hand had opened since she herself had closed it. The key was not rusty, but the lock was, and it grated harshly, and the hinges creaked as she pushed open the door. Then she stood inside.

Just as she had left it ! She had remembered to bring a candle with her, though it was still daylight in the other rooms, and its faint light was insufficient to make manifest all the ravages of time. There were the books she had been reading, after her fitful fashion, still scattered on the table, with a man's glove lying among them ; she recollected it in an instant, it was one of Robert Waldron's. There was her fanciful little couch of blue damask drawn up to the fireside, and the chair beside it where he had been sitting, and Hester's low hassock between her seat and his. The piano was still open, and a yellow page of music, no doubt some song she had been singing to him, was resting upon the stand. A grey dust and tarnish had fallen upon all, but she scarcely saw it. It

seemed to her as if it could only have been yesterday, last night, when she locked it up ; and she had been passing through some horrible dream. This sharp martyrdom of repentance was no more than a trick of her forewarning conscience. The utter stillness and solitariness of the house was but an accident of the passing hour. Hester must be asleep in her little bed ; and her husband would come in soon from chapel. When she saw Robert again she would bid him come near her no more.

Rose stood in the middle of the room gazing vacantly about her. It seemed as if after a mighty tempest, after a strong flood of great troubles and sins which had tossed her feeble soul from billow to billow, she had been brought suddenly home again to the haven where she could cast anchor in still smooth water. She had been very happy to-day. She felt like a child whose face is hidden in the close embrace of its mother, and who sees no longer the terrors which have driven it to that refuge. She was vaguely, childishly happy again for a moment. Everything evil was drawing near to an end. The night was almost past, and the day was at hand. Even here, in the

place which should have upbraided her most loudly, she saw sadness indeed, but not hopelessness. Her sins, which were many, had been pardoned.

She crossed the room slowly to the piano, and stooped down to look at the music-sheet on it. It was no song, but a chant,—“ I will arise and go to my Father.” She remembered now that it was to her husband, not to Robert Waldron, she had sung it; and he had stood beside her, his hand resting upon her shoulder, and his voice, a low, weak, yet sweet voice, joining with hers. Was it not a token for good, finding this sacred chant still open? Then she had known nothing about going to the Father. Now she had arisen, with all her sins and unfaithfulness, and gone to Him, and He had seen her afar off, and had received her gladly. Would it not be the same with her husband? She sat down and ran her fingers absently along the discoloured keys. The jarring, jingling tones, which had lost all harmony, brought her back sharply to the full reality of her position. She could dream no more. The small mirror, which she had had set over the piano, reflected from its dulled surface a faded,

stricken, withered face, instead of the bright, laughing features of the young proud mistress of a new home. She was Rose Morley, the guilty wife of a dishonoured husband.

## CHAPTER VI.

### *A NIGHT OF TERROR.*

JOHN MORLEY went up to the chapel, and after waiting there some time, and finding no other member of the small church was coming, he went back directly to his house. All day he had been the prey of vehement agitation, and the approaching return of night did not tend to allay it. He let himself into his lonely dwelling, and stood upon the threshold for a minute, with the door half open in his hand, listening for some sound to break the stillness of his home. A craven fear of being quite alone was at work within him for the first time in his life; his flesh crept and his nerves tingled. But he had no resource, there was no means of escaping from this new and panic dread. He closed the door and went on, stopping to change his boots for the slippers he found put ready for him. He entered his own parlour and lit his lamp; but this attack upon his nervous system continued to gather strength. His hands trembled until he could not turn

over the leaves of his book. A vague, indescribable impression was produced upon his mind by something in the aspect of his room, that his lost wife had been there a few minutes ago,—had but just quitted it. He fancied more keenly than ever that he could almost see her and hear her. An agony of mingled despair and tenderness shook his soul to the centre. It might have been but a day or two since Rose had forsaken him ; it might have been the very night when he had aroused his little girl from her sleep, telling her it was better to die than to live. There was something unutterably mournful in this strong, unwitnessed, insupportable anguish, which mastered John Morley, and brought the past before him a hundred-fold more vivid than the present.

Upon this paroxysm of his soul, which just now was bearing him rapidly to the verge of insanity, there fell suddenly the shrill, false jangle of the piano in the room overhead. He lifted himself up, and hearkened with a ghastly face. The discord ran through his fevered brain once, and then ceased ; the house was plunged again into the dreariness of an unbroken silence.

He held his breath and listened for some minutes, his heart failing him for fear of he knew not what. He believed that Carl had summoned Hester to the death-bed of Rose. Could it be, could it possibly be, that in the supreme hour and article of death, she was having permission to return once more, in ghostly presence, to her abandoned home? His wrath against her, and his tenderness for her, rose again to their highest pitch. If her apparition itself stood before him, the mere spectral shade of his guilty wife, he would hurl against it all the pent-up anger of these many years, or lavish upon it the treasure of his unexhausted love. Was there any other sound to be heard, or was it his fancy that now a stealthy step, scarcely louder than the passing of a breath of wind through the house, was creeping across the floor overhead? The moisture stood in large drops upon his forehead; and his face grew set and pallid as the face of a corpse. He tried to speak aloud, if only to dispel the awful stillness about him, but his throat was dry and his tongue parched. At length there came to his ears a shrill cry and a smothered sob,—a strange, terrible, inexplicable sound



which made him deaf for a minute or two to every other noise. When that surging in his brain was over, and his dimmed sight grew clear again, he laid a stern hold upon his fleeting courage, and with slow steps ascended to the floor above.

His own chamber was the first upon the landing, and he had scarcely ever been beyond it. He passed Hester's open door, and glanced round the room, but there was no sound or sight of horror there. Farther on, a fringe of light glimmered in the dusk from under the door of the locked-up drawing-room. His footsteps faltered and were arrested for an instant. A light there! What then could there be within that room? His failing and reluctant feet carried him to the very door-sill. The catch of the lock had slipped, and the feeblest effort of his hand would suffice to push the door open; but he could not move. Superstition swooped down upon him with all the might of its most ghastly terrors, and he had no strength to contend with it. At last he lashed himself up into a fury, a storm of ruthless anger against Rose. If he and she were both dead, and had met at length in the

mysterious land of spirits, he would even there denounce her for the woes she had made him suffer.

He pushed the door with his hand, and looked in. The one candle burning upon the table left the corners of the room in obscurity, but there fell enough light upon the piano to disclose to him the form of some woman, slight and slender like her, with a pale grey shawl wrapped about her, leaning forward, or rather lying against the piano before which she sat. The attitude was utterly helpless and inanimate, as if she had fallen there fainting. Her long fair hair had dropped down about her shoulders. He held himself back, quivering with passion, and gazing at her with steadfast and flaming eyes. It was indeed Rose, whether in the body or out of the body, he could not tell; it was his wife, whom he had loved so fondly, and whom he had loved more, he knew it now, since she left him than while she was still with him.

He raised his hand to his burning head, and pressed it across his eyes, but the apparition remained there in its attitude of motionless despair. Once he thought it moved, but it

was only the flicker of the candle in the draught from the open door which set the shadows about her fluttering. He heard in the distant part of the house, where the workrooms were, the shutting of some door, and the turning of a lock, and he knew it was Lawson going away from his work. He was late to-night, he thought; turning the words over and over again in his mind, as if glad to get some common every-day idea into his brain. The candle was burning low, and would not last many minutes longer. In a short time he would be alone in the darkness, with this awful and speechless form. He must needs speak; he must enter; he must perhaps touch this strange shadow. With a sudden shrill cry of a man's most terrible anguish, which awoke hollow echoes through the empty house, John Morley cast himself into the gloomy room before him.

Ten minutes later he came out again, with a face from whose veins all the blood seemed to have gone, but with a stain of deep crimson upon the palms of his hands, at which he looked again and again with eyes of horror. He went hesitatingly downstairs into his own

parlour, and opened his desk, and a drawer within it where he kept his money. He took out a roll of notes, and spread them before him with an air of bewilderment, resting his forehead upon his hand, which stained his white hair with clammy clots of blood. He sat there a few minutes only, but he fancied these were hours; and the soft pure grey of the evening sky, with a few rosy clouds floating over it, he took for the dawn of the morning. He roused himself, shuddering; and lifting his bloodshot and heavy eyes to the dying light in the heavens, he muttered aloud in the silent room, "I must flee to Hester."

He went upstairs to put together a few clothes in a portmanteau, with a confused notion of preparing for a journey. Then he caught sight of his blood-stained hair in the glass, and shivered and moaned like a frightened child. He washed it, and his hands again and again, as if he could see the stain long after it had been washed away. After this he took up his portmanteau and left the house unlocked and empty; strode quickly up the street, past the chapel, under the trees, and along the lanes which had invited him in vain

only yesterday. He walked all night swiftly, with perplexed and wandering thoughts ; and when the dawn came, he inquired of the first person he met where the nearest station was, and there he took the earliest train for London.


## CHAPTER VII.

### *BESIDE HIMSELF.*

A LITTLE after six o'clock on Sunday evening Hester entered the porch of Carl's chapel. Already the fashionably-dressed congregation were beginning to arrive, and she heard his praises spoken as she waited to be put into a seat. She was at last conducted to an obscure place in one of the galleries, where, though she could see the pulpit well, it was not probable that Carl could recognise her face amidst the number surrounding him. Hester was content, however; she would hear him again, and when the service was over she would go to speak to him in the vestry about the little Hester.

Carl appeared at the appointed minute, and she trembled nervously as he glanced round the crowded chapel. Then followed an hour of intense happiness,—that of a woman whose most devout worship is led by the being she loves the most. Hester's whole soul was in that brief fleeting season of worship; an in-

terval so short, that when the mass of people rose to go away, she looked about her in amazement. Carl seemed to have caught her eye then, for he stood a moment before leaving the pulpit, gazing towards her. It was some time before she could get down the crowded staircase, and when she did so the chapel-keeper told her the best way to get to the minister's vestry was to go round on the outside of the building. She passed on with the throng, but just as she was about to turn to the corner of the chapel, she felt her hand suddenly seized, and herself drawn rapidly down towards the street. It was her father, who had taken hold of her, and was hurrying her towards a cab which was waiting at a little distance. But what could bring her father there? What terrible calamity could have driven him so far adrift from his fixed habits? Had Rose persisted in discovering herself to him; and had some catastrophe been the result? He did not speak to her, and when she spoke he appeared deaf to her voice. He sank down into a corner of the cab, covering his face with his hands. Once he looked up, and there was a gleam of light, not quite sane, in his sunken eyes.



"What is the matter, father?" she ventured to ask.

"Not yet!" he cried, shrinking back again; "not yet, Hester! I am not quite ready yet."

They drove rapidly to some station, and he sent her on to the platform while he bought the tickets. A train was on the point of starting, and he hurried her into a carriage. It never occurred to her to suppose that they were going anywhere but back to Little Aston; and by the speed at which they travelled, she judged that they would soon be half-way there. This was as they passed somewhat slowly through a station (for they stopped at none), and she saw by the clock there that it was after eleven. She wondered how little Hester would bear the disappointment of not seeing her again; and the tears she could not keep back, and which she would not wipe away lest her father should see them, stole down her cheeks. Presently the train slackened speed, and in a few minutes came to a stand-still. There was no station near; and it was as dark as it ever is during the early nights of June.

"What can be the matter?" she exclaimed




to herself, involuntarily. Their fellow-passengers were collecting together their cloaks and parcels, and preparing to leave the carriage. The gentleman who was next to her caught her half-audible exclamation.

"There is nothing the matter," he answered, pleasantly; "the train runs alongside the vessels, and we have nothing to do but embark immediately. Your luggage will be quite safe."

"This young lady is my daughter," said John Morley, hurriedly; "and I will take care of her."

Hester looked out, and saw an utterly inexplicable and unfamiliar scene. There lay just before her the black outlines of a steamer, and beyond them a dark tossing plain, with a faint suggestion of light upon it, as if it had not yet quite lost the lustre of the sunset. A confusion of strange cries and voices surrounded her, amidst which she heard her father whisper, "For God's sake be silent, and follow me." Almost before she could recover from her amazement, she found herself on the deck of one of the steamers, which soon began to move slowly away from the pier.



The other passengers had hurried down into the cabin to secure berths for the night; and the deck was deserted by all except the captain and his crew, who were busy in getting safely out of port. John Morley led his daughter to a seat removed from every danger of being overheard, and sat down close beside her, shivering with excitement as much as from the chilly air of the sea.

"Hester," he whispered, in a hollow, tremulous voice, "I am fleeing to a city of refuge."

"What is it, father?" she asked, in steady and tender tones. "Tell me all that has happened to you."

He was silent for some time, his eyes fixed upon the dark line of shore they could yet see as they were leaving it behind them. Hester asked herself if all this was true,—that they, her father and herself, were escaping secretly by night from England, where only a few hours ago she had been listening to Carl in his own chapel. It was all too real, astounding as it was, for her to doubt its truth; it was too wild to be a trick of her sleep. The great sea spread around them,—the sea she had never seen, which she would never see

again without remembering this night, indelibly stamped upon her brain. Without moving or speaking, she sat beside her father, waiting for him to break the silence.

“I scarcely know how it all happened,” he said at last, in the tone of one thinking aloud. “Rose was there,—not her ghost; it could not have been that, for the stain of blood came off upon my hands, and my hair was reddened with it. She was dead when I went into the room,—murdered; but who could have murdered her? I would not have touched a hair of her head. Such pretty hair it used to be, as golden as the sunlight. But then, you see, nobody would have believed that I was not the murderer. I do not know myself who could have been so cruel, so fierce; and she had harmed no one as she had harmed me. All the world would have said I was guilty; and if they had not hanged me, they would have imprisoned me as mad, though I should swear I did not do it. So I said I will flee,—I will escape from my country while there is time. It would be a most horrible thing for my daughter, if her father was hung as a murderer, or shut up as a madman.”

Hester's heart had grown faint and sick as she listened to her father's almost unconscious and delirious sentences. But at this moment the captain came up to ask them if they would not go below, and she had to control herself to answer him quietly.

"My father is ill," she answered, "and we would rather stay here a little while. By-and-by we will go down."

He stayed beside them for a few minutes, making some observations which she scarcely heard, though she exerted herself to reply to them; and then he left them once more to themselves.

"Father," she said, earnestly, "answer me a question or two. How did you find out she was at home?"

"I came in from chapel at twenty minutes to eight," he said, "and sat down in my own chair; but I could not read. All at once I heard the sound of her piano, and, some minutes after, a strange noise between a scream and a sob. Then, just as the clock was striking eight, I went upstairs, and there was a light shining in her room, and I went to look in, and Rose was there,—Rose herself; not her spirit."

"Did you speak to her?" asked Hester.

"No," he answered, "my tongue refused its office. I went up to her and laid my hand upon her, but she never moved. Then I saw her hair all clotted with blood, and I lifted up her head and found that she was gone far away from me, where no man knoweth love or hatred. She was dead—murdered, and could never be pardoned by me."

"But how could it be?" cried Hester, who could scarcely realize the fact that Rose was dead, in the horror of hearing that she had been murdered."

"I know nothing," said John Morley, gloomily. "We were alone in the house. It was I who found her. My hands and hair were stained with her blood. If I had given myself up, they could have done nothing else but punish me for the crime. But I am innocent, Hester: as innocent as yourself."

"And did you leave her there?" she asked.

"I carried her to the sofa," he said, "and laid her down gently. She was dead, and I could kiss her again. I covered her over with a grey shawl which was stained red. The candle was almost burnt out, and I could stay

no longer. Yes, I left her there; and she lies there now, perhaps. They may not discover I am gone very quickly, for nobody goes into that room. I think I have been almost mad all day, but I am better now with you, Hester. O Hester, be very pitiful towards me!"

He broke out suddenly into low, smothered moans and wailings, and put his arms round her, resting his head upon her shoulder, while she pressed her lips again and again to his face, and told him that she was his daughter, his child, who could never forsake him, never feel anything but love and pity for him. So she soothed him, crushing down the grief and terror of her own heart, and seeking the most tender expressions of her affection for him. He grew calm at last, calmer than he had been for many days.

"Did I do right in fleeing?" he asked, anxiously. "I could bear it no longer. My dishonour has been a burden as heavy as I could bear; and this would have been too much. I must have lost my reason, if they had not made it seem that I had lost it before. Do you think me mad, Hester?"

"No, my dear," she answered. He clung

so much to her like a child, that unconsciously her voice and expression were those of one who talks to a child. There were many things she wanted to learn yet, and she must keep him as calm as possible.

"But I am almost mad," he said. "I have neither a sound mind nor a sound body. I have destroyed them both. O my God! what is to become of us?"

A cry which Hester echoed in her heart of hearts. She knew that his words were true; that he had been dwelling too long on the borderland between sanity and insanity. But then, was it indeed true that his hand had not been suddenly hurried into a deed of violence such as he had committed against Robert Waldron? How was she to be sure of that? Rose was dead—murdered. Who could be guilty, if it were not her father? She felt a steadfast child-like loyalty towards him. If he were criminal, her calm, innocent, simple nature would understand the character of his crime better than a more worldly and more divided heart could have done. It was heinous, terrible, mournful, but not unpardonable: not without extenuating circumstances. She must

think for him, take the guidance of his flight. To her fell the choice of a city of refuge.

"Where are we going to?" she asked, and the simplicity of her question struck her forcibly amidst the perplexity of their circumstances.

"We are going to Paris," he answered; "after that, anywhere,—anywhere that I can be safe."

The morning dawned before Hester could form any plan for the future. She saw the pale streaks of light coming across the smooth level of the sea, and playing upon the edge of its soft ripple. Her father had fallen into an uneasy slumber, and his dress and hers were wet with the heavy dew of the night. She had been tempted to wish that both of them could be lost amidst the multitude of waves, and lie together in peace with the depths closing them about, and the weeds wrapped about their heads. The captain came and looked compassionately upon her father's pallid face, and she called a shadowy smile to her lips and eyes as she met his gaze.

"Good-morning," he said, in a low tone; "we have had a very fine passage across."

"Yes," she answered.



"You have crossed before?" he continued.

"No," said Hester.

"Well, there is no trouble; the omnibus will be at the gate of the custom-house to take you straight on to the station. I will get your luggage passed quickly."

"We have scarcely any luggage," she answered, with an inward tremor; "only my father's portmanteau. I shall buy all I want in Paris."

"To be sure," said the captain; "you will get everything in the first fashion there."

A spasm of hysterical laughter contracted Hester's throat, and played oddly upon her face. A flash of the grotesque darted across the profound darkness of her circumstances; but it brought with it a vivid quickening of her oppressed brain. She saw what she could do. She would pass quickly through Paris with her father, not tarrying there at all, and go on to Burgundy. She knew well by the minute description of Lawson's mother, the little town from which she had come. It was a very quiet, very remote place, several leagues from the nearest line of rail, and where the visit of any English was an almost unheard-of

thing. In this hour of keen mental activity she could recollect the names of the curé, the doctor, the baker even ; all whose histories the garrulous old Frenchwoman had loved to narrate. The little town did not seem strange to Hester. It offered her an asylum from afar off within its old grey walls. She knew the patois of the province well ; she could speak it as freely as the purer French Robert Waldron had perfected her in. This should be their city of refuge.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### *A CITY OF REFUGE.*

HESTER experienced no difficulty in making her way through Paris. Her habit of conversing in French with Lawson and his mother had given her a fluent use of the language; and though her manner and appearance, as well as her father's, were unmistakably English, she had no need to attract unusual attention to them by any ignorance or difficulty on her part. She made inquiries as to the route for Burgundy, and went at once from one station to the other, staying no more than a few hours in Paris. They arrived in safety, and without observation, at the small country station to which they were bound. There were yet six leagues to accomplish before reaching Ecquemenville; but an omnibus from that town was waiting for the train. It was a four hours' journey, for the diligence was heavy and cumbrous, and the cart-horses attached to it by rope-harness were slow-footed; four miles and a half an hour was the utmost speed they

could attain. After the rapid whirl, and the overwhelming excitement of the last thirty-six hours, Hester found a relief in the slow progress of their conveyance. She was worn out, and her heavy eyes scarcely saw the strange country they were traversing; but John Morley was all eager and surprised attention. They were crossing a level plain of several miles, with neither hedgerows nor clumps of trees to vary its uniform aspect, except that here and there, at the interval of two or three miles, they passed a coppice of stone-pines; and that very far away in the marvellous clear light of the distance, there stretched a black, irregular line against the horizon, which spoke plainly of a forest. Since the moment the steamer had left the pier at Folkstone, John Morley had abandoned himself implicitly to Hester's guidance. He did not ask where she was taking him; though his mind was all alert to the impressions the novel scenery was producing upon it. He had never been out of England; and, as we know, for the last eleven years, he had travelled no farther from his house than to the chapel where he had once been wont to worship.

He had passed through sharp dolour and sore travail, and come out after the sharpest and sorest pang of all into this new life, where every object was fresh and strange to him. His brain, with a healing forgetfulness, refused to recall the later scenes through which he had come. Everything about his route diverted his thoughts. The blue blouses of the peasantry, the coquettish snow-white caps of the country-women, the jingle of the bells about the horse-gear, the wonderful blue of the sky, the clear dark shadows, the golden harvest of the vast plain ripening in the full light of the June sun, withdrew him from his morbid musings. By fine gradations, as fine as the footsteps with which the morning steals towards sleeping the earth, his bent and heavy eyebrows relaxed a little, and the rigidity of his lips softened. One might have said towards the close of their journey, when they came in sight of the little town, lying in a valley, and girded about with vineyards, with grey old walls, and narrow gateways, giving it the aspect of a true city of refuge ; one might have said that his face kindled with a smile struggling from his soul, but scarcely strong enough to reach the surface.

The only thoughts Hester's weary mind could retain had been anxious ones. Her father had given up his pocket-book to her; and she had found in it notes for £100, the residue of the money lent by Mr. Waldron. She knew pretty well the cost of living in this remote part of Burgundy, and that this sum, with her thrifty economy, would keep them well for eighteen months or more. But what was to become of them? Were they really exiled for ever from England and Little Aston? Safe they would be, but what a safety? The diligence entered Ecquemonville under a gateway in the thick walls, with the old gates still hanging upon their hinges, and grown over with lichens and mosses. It stopped before an inn on one side of the square which formed the market-place, with an obelisk in its centre. A group of curious loungers awaited its arrival, and a bevy of laundresses, who were washing at a fountain close by, paused in their work as it drove up. Hester and her father descended from it, and caused as great a sensation as if they had fallen in their midst from the clouds. But, with these exceptions, the place was all silent and deserted, not a creature was to be


seen ; for the sultry heat of the afternoon had driven the townspeople to their coolest retreats.

"Can you tell me if the widow Limet has apartments to let now?" asked Hester of the conductor of the diligence, who had been staring at her and her father ever since descending from his high seat, without blinking his eyelids once, and whose eyes opened still wider at this question.

"The veuve Limet!" he stammered ; "is it that madame knows veuve Limet?"

"No," she answered with a wan smile, "but I have heard she sometimes has rooms to let ; and as we may stay here some time, I prefer going there to living at an hotel."

He would conduct them to the widow Limet's, he said ; and they followed him, Hester recognising the place from the minute and frequent descriptions of Lawson's mother. Here were the shops, with their odd miscellany of wares, the cafés painted in gay colours, the butchers' open stalls with their dwarf orange-trees and flowers, all of which Madame had loved to contrast with the dingy streets of Little Aston. Towards one corner of the square,



five or six of the shops, having their upper floor projecting above them for eight feet or more, were as cool and almost as dark as cellars. At one of these their conductor stopped, and called aloud for the widow Limet, who appeared from some inner recess, and engaged at once in a combat of words with the guide, so garrulous and voluble, that Hester could not put in a syllable for some time.

“We have been recommended to you,” she said, recollecting how often Lawson’s mother had urged her to go to Burgundy. “My father and I want some rooms for several months. He cannot speak French. Will you let us look at your apartments?”

The widow Limet led the way upstairs to the room projecting over the shop,—an odd place to English eyes. The walls had been stencilled in gaudy colours and grotesque designs. The uncarpeted floor had been waxed and brushed to a dangerous polish. A bed, with red cotton hangings, stood in a recess, but the rest of the furniture was evidently intended to serve for a sitting-room. A closet opened out of it containing a smaller bed,



which Hester decided would do very well for herself. The accommodation was simple but inexpensive ; eight francs a week, with attendance, being the rent the widow Limet asked for it.

In a short time John Morley and Hester were seated at the centre table, with an impromptu meal before them of omelettes and dried fruits, and cherries such as are never to be tasted in England. John Morley ate heartily, but in vague amazement. The elderly voluble Frenchwoman trotting in and out with some utterly foreign dish in her hand, and an unintelligible jargon upon her tongue ; the bottles of wine she brought in, which she held up between his eye and the light that he might see the golden bubbles imprisoned in them ; the ease with which Hester understood and answered ; all was odd and inexplicable, but he would give himself up to it. There was something terrible in the past over which a thick curtain had fallen ; and he would not lift it so long as it would hang there undisturbed.

That night Hester slept a heavy, dreamless sleep,—the sleep of utter exhaustion, when the brain slumbers as profoundly as the body.

Nature exacted this repose rigorously; and now that the immediate strain was over, now that the walls of the city encompassed them about, Hester could yield herself to it. She slept far into the next day; and found, when she awoke, her father sitting at her side, watching her with the care and tenderness of a mother.

## CHAPTER IX.

### *SATURDAY NIGHT.*

ON the Saturday evening, when John Morley was fleeing in a panic of fear from his own home and town, he had scarcely passed the chapel before Madame Lawson emerged from the narrow alley opposite to it. It was quite dusk, a season which the old foreigner preferred for her walks, in consequence, as she said, of the impoliteness of the English boys, who generally hailed her appearance with numerous rough greetings. She had left her son comfortably settled for the night, with permission to sleep in her own bed, which preserved its air of state in the English garret. She knocked in vain for some time at John Morley's house-door, but at last she tried the handle, which turned readily in her grasp. It was very quiet within, but a light was shining in the inner room, and she proceeded there boldly. It was John Morley's lamp burning as he had left it, and shedding its accustomed gleam upon the books scattered around it.

Madame puckered her eyebrows, and hummed a little song, but no voice or sound answered her. She took up the lamp and went into the kitchen; all was quiet and orderly there as the servant had left it, with the fire almost dead in the bottom of the grate. Upstairs, with the lamp still in her hands, for it was quite dark now inside the house, proceeded Madame, peering through each open door as she passed it. No one was to be seen. Where then was monsieur; and where was the servant? She could not have held any conversation with either of them, but she wished to see their faces and make her salutation to them. The still solitude daunted her; and she crossed herself several times, muttering a little prayer, as she had hummed a tune downstairs. There was another door open at the end of the passage, and she went on towards it. A faint scent of mould and mildew met her, like the air from a vault. Upon the bare planks she was treading there were spots of blood, but her eyes did not detect them. She entered the room, and looked around her. There, upon the sofa, lay a woman, perfectly motionless, with a shawl laid over her. Madame, frightened

now, but brave with the courage of old age, approached her, and raised the covering from her face.

A marble face, icy cold, with rigid lips and frozen eyelids; the hands also chilly and numb. Yet to her experienced touch,—for in her station an aged woman has felt the clay-cold frigidity of death too often to be easily deceived,—there was still a degree of warmth which spoke of life lingering about the heart. She saw quickly that there was little which she could do, and that immediate help was necessary; but how could she make any one understand that she wanted Mr. Grant called in? Her shrewdness, a French subtlety which made her keen at scenting any intrigue, recoiled from the idea of bringing this incident before the public if it could be avoided. She raised Rose's head a little, put a drop or two of *eau de vie*, which she carried about her, into her mouth; and then locking the front door carefully, to provide against any other intrusion like her own, she hastened as quickly as she could to Grant's house.

Fortunately for the explanation of her errand, she saw, upon approaching the house,

Robert Waldron standing at the gate, in conversation with Grant. The twilight had not quite faded here outside of the town, and a soft exquisite tranquillity, the indescribable sense of repose which can only exist at the end of the week, before the dawn of a day of rest and truce with labour, pervaded the whole evening scene. Within the house Annie was just kindling a light, and she could be seen, with her bright face, leaning over the new flame in the lamp. Robert had just looked in, and sighed to himself as he talked with Grant, whose lot seemed so much more enviable than his own, when Madame threw herself upon his arm, and poured forth her hurried story, which came like a crash of thunder upon him.

“Good heavens! what is the matter?” cried Grant, as Robert reeled and caught at the gate to keep himself from falling.

“He has discovered her and murdered her!” gasped Robert. “Come; there is life yet, she says. Be quick, Grant. Come with me instantly.”

He had recovered himself while he was speaking, and darted off at full speed down the

street, followed by Grant, who knew no more of what had taken place than the few incoherent words of Robert conveyed to him. They had to wait a few minutes at the door, and then Robert, still wildly and wanderingly, told him what Madame had said,—that a woman lay nearly dead in the house, and that neither John Morley nor Hester were to be found. She was almost murdered, he repeated, in a voice of extreme terror; and what would become of him and Hester?

As soon as the door was opened, Robert strode through the house into the court beyond, and up the staircase to the loft, where he expected to find Rose. The poor place was empty; the window had been left open, and the wind was flapping the curtain to and fro gaily, and fluttering the leaves of an open book upon the window-sill. He turned away from it with the last gleam of self-complacency faded from his face. Grant, who had followed him closely, had already descended into the court, and was obeying the vehement gesticulations of Madame. Robert could not stay behind. An irresistible impulse carried him on to see the thing he dreaded; though, like one running

swiftly down hill, he might be about to cast himself into some gulf which would swallow him up in hopeless remorse. He overtook Grant at the door of the drawing-room, and thrust him roughly on one side. The lamp burned brightly, revealing to him the scene he had so often looked upon. He saw the room as Rose had seen it. His glove lying upon the table ; the open piano with the music upon it ; Hester's little seat beside his chair. And there lay Rose upon her sofa, with a shawl thrown over her, looking as if she slept. He trode softly nearer to her, and stood beside her, not heeding in his profound abstraction how solemn and silent Grant was. Her attitude was peaceful, full of rest and quiet ; the hair half hiding her face from his sight. But he could not stir, and when he tried to speak his voice was hollow and inarticulate. He would have sacrificed his own life gladly at that instant to recall her to the life and happiness she had forfeited.

How long he stood there he did not know ; but at length Grant put him aside gently, and lifted up the tangled and matted hair with his hand. There was the wound ; a stroke like



that which had nearly slain him had fallen upon her as well. "This was his work," said his conscience, so long dethroned, but now asserting itself with mightier tyranny. He looked into Grant's face, and shuddered at the expression upon it.

"She is not quite dead, my poor fellow," said Grant, pityingly; "you recovered from a severer blow; but she is a woman, and delicate. We must not hope too much."

For some time they were busy about the almost lifeless form: Robert obeying mechanically the directions of Grant, and translating his orders to the Frenchwoman. They carried Rose to Hester's bedroom, and laid her upon her bed. When all was done which Grant could do, he went downstairs with Robert into John Morley's parlour.

"You know who she is," said Robert, avoiding Grant's eye.

"I have guessed," answered Grant, briefly.

"He must have found her," continued Robert. "Hester sheltered her here without his knowledge. I only knew of it while he was ill a few weeks ago. But where can they be gone to?"

"They have made their escape," answered Grant; "yet it can only be by an hour or two at the utmost. Must we pursue them?"

"Pursue them!" ejaculated Robert; "what for? Good God! what are we to do? If we bring him back, and she dies—"

He did not finish his sentence, but sank down into John Morley's chair, looking up to Grant with a face as haggard as that of the man he had wronged.

"If she dies, he may be punished as a murderer," said Grant; "but living and escaping, he is a madman, and he takes Hester with him! He is mad,—I could swear to it; and he has Hester in his power."

A miserable silence fell upon them both as they turned over in their minds the wretched alternative presented to them. The life of Rose hung upon a thread which might snap at any moment; and to bring back John Morley, whether she lived or died, would be to subject him to a criminal prosecution, in which he could not fail to be found guilty. As yet the secret was their own, and could be confined to very few,—themselves, Annie, Lawson's mother, and Lawson himself, perhaps, who was devoted to

John Morley. The most imminent danger to Rose would be over during the next twenty-four hours; and until then, it being Sunday, John Morley's flight would remain unknown and unsuspected by his townspeople. He would have time to make good his escape. But on the other hand, if they let him go, they left Hester in his power, under the control of a madman, at the very moment when he was most frenzied by his recent act of vengeance. It seemed impossible to leave her thus. A flood of passionate tenderness swept across the tempest of remorse and anguish on which Robert Waldron was tossed. He would have been willing to give her into the charge and protection of Carl himself, if by that he could only be sure that she was safe and, at last, happy.

"Ought we not to tell your father?" asked Grant. "He is a magistrate, and we should incur great responsibility by keeping this matter secret. Suppose she should die!"

"We must run the risk," answered Robert, after a moment's consideration; "I will shield you if any blame comes to us. No, no; if we tell my father, his duty as a magistrate would be to send in pursuit of John Morley. Grant,

we must let him get off; but for Hester's sake, I must follow them myself."

"Where would they be likely to go?" said Grant. "Hester has never been away from Little Aston, and he has not stirred out of it for years. Let us look about and see if we can find any clue."

"And then I will go down to the station," added Robert.

They went upstairs to John Morley's bedroom. Everything there bore the marks of confusion and haste. The drawers were left partly open, and the clothes in them were tossed about. Those which Rose had laid out for the next day still lay neatly folded upon a chair by the bedside. The basin was half-full of crimsoned water, and there were stains of blood upon the dressing-table. No doubt had existed in their minds before as to who had been guilty, and everything there fastened the crime upon John Morley. But they could discover no trace of flight about Hester's room. There all was maidenly order: a delicate, innocent, girlish harmony, which it had seemed almost sacrilege to disturb when they had laid Rose upon her bed.

"I will go down to the station," repeated Robert Waldron.

It was growing late by this time, and only two night-porters were about the station. They had seen no one; had not been there during the day. He turned back again disappointed and cast down. Grant wanted him to go up to his house to tell Annie he should be away all night, and to bring his case of instruments. He was about starting, when Madame, who had been wonderfully silent, ventured to ask a question.

"Where then is monsieur?" she inquired.

"I don't know," answered Robert; "I wish to know; and where Hester is too."

"Oh, the little one is gone to London," answered Madame; "she set out at midday. That is why I find myself here. I come to watch the house while mademoiselle is away."

Here was a new element of mystery and perplexity. Hester had gone many hours before John Morley could have wreaked his long-cherished vengeance upon Rose. Was it possible that he had acted upon a premeditated purpose, instead of having been hurried into the crime by the impulse and frenzy of the

moment? And upon what pretext could he have sent Hester on to London? If she were gone there, Robert's jealousy assured him that she would go to Carl.

"Grant," he said, "I will start for London by the first train to-morrow."

He went at once after that to Grant's house, and returned with the articles he needed. All through the long night he watched, with Grant and Madame, by the side of Rose, whose fate swung slowly from life to death, and from death to life again, as hour after hour crept sluggishly by. To Grant there was stimulus in it: the keen interest he felt in the triumph or failure of his skill; and Madame, in almost unbroken ignorance, and only with a few cunning guesses as to the truth, looked on with nearly equal excitement. But to Robert it was a night of slow martyrdom; of a crucifixion of his whole nature. His old love for Rose, his new love for Hester, his easy good-nature, his selfish repugnance to witness any suffering, his memory of the past, his dread of the future,—all were compassing him about, and there was no refuge, nor any one to deliver him.

The morning came and found him a changed

man. Grant looked into his face, and the tears started to his eyes. He pressed his hand hard in his own, but he could speak no word of consolation. Rose still lingered on the edge of the open grave, and might be swallowed up in it before he could reach London; but it was best that he should go. They parted in silence, and with a heart bowed down, Robert Waldron set out on his journey.

There were two trains starting nearly at the same time, run by different companies. Robert, caring nothing by which he went, started by the first, which was detained upon the road by a trifling accident to the engine. The second took up John Morley on its route at a station farther on; and thus, by the merest accident in the world, Robert missed meeting with the man whom he was pursuing.

## CHAPTER X.

### *NO CLUE.*

IT was six o'clock when the train reached the London terminus, and Robert knew that Carl would certainly be at his chapel. He was the only person known to Hester, and therefore it was to him that he must go for any chance of information. He called a cab, and bade the driver drive as quickly as he could to the chapel; but the service had already begun when they arrived at it. In no mood to present himself in the midst of a congregation, Robert found his way to the vestry, and waited there in growing impatience for the conclusion of the service. The door was open, and he could hear every word uttered by Carl's clear voice, so modulated and varied that commonplace words took almost a tone of eloquence from it. He was preaching concerning temptation; and Robert's bruised spirit felt more deeply wounded by it. What did this boy, with his pure, unsullied life, his soul which had never betrayed its own ideal, know of temptation, or of sin? At length the



torture was ended. Carl pronounced the last soothing benediction; and in a minute or two afterwards entered his vestry.

On his part, when Carl's eyes fell upon Robert, he started back with a momentary disquiet and apprehension. He looked worn and ill. The terrible scene of the past night had made him utterly regardless of those small, minute cares as to his appearance, which had invariably occupied him hitherto. He had not slept at all; and he had suffered horribly. The years, which had seemed to pass over him leaving no trace, had been graving secret lines upon his features, which now started out in strong relief, ageing him abruptly. Carl fancied, as he stood by the window, with the light falling upon his head, that he could see a faint tinge of white, a shining line of silver here and there amongst his disordered hair. They had not parted as friends; and they knew each other to be rivals. Carl closed the door, and locked it against any intruder; and then waited for Robert to speak.

"Do you know anything of Hester?" asked Robert, approaching him, and speaking in a low voice.

"Hester! no!" answered Carl, in amazement and alarm. "What is the matter with her?"

"She came up to London yesterday," said Robert; "and I made sure you would know where she is. She had no one to go to but you. For God's sake, Carl! do not hide from me anything about her. I only ask to know that she is safe; that you are taking care of her. I will not ask to see her. I give her up to you altogether. Only remove my anxiety. Tell me that you have found some safe home for her."

"I know nothing about her," cried Carl, in anxiety equal to his own. "What do you mean? Is not Hester at home with her father?"

"They are neither of them at home," he answered. "Hester came to London by the twelve o'clock train from Little Aston, yesterday; and her father fled last night."

"Fled!" echoed Carl, his heart sinking within him.

"He has murdered Rose," continued Robert, hurriedly; "and I am in pursuit of him. Not to give him up; no, but to save Hester."

He is mad, Carl; and what can she do with a madman? What can we do? Have you no clue at all to the motive that brought her up here? My only hope was in you."

"Stop!" he exclaimed, as a sudden light flashed across him; "she must have come to see little Hester. I wrote on Thursday to tell her about the child; and she must have made up her mind to come and see her. She is very ill."

If it had been possible for Robert's face to grow more pallid, it would have done so at these words,—a stray shaft shot at random by Carl, whose thoughts were too full of Hester to remember that he had betrayed a secret which he was pledged to keep. He was in haste to be gone, to hurry to the school where the child lived, in order to make inquiries there. Neither of them knew by how small and trifling a chance Hester had missed breaking in upon their interview.

"Where are you going?" asked Robert, as Carl opened the outer door of the vestry.

"Where?" exclaimed Carl, impetuously; "to find Hester. We must find her to-night. Did you not say her father is a madman,

and has murdered Rose? Find her? Can I take any rest or sleep until she is safe? Yet God has her in His safe keeping!"

He said these last words with a half sob, and raised his hand to his eyes for an instant. Then he turned towards Robert with a glance of profound and unutterable trouble.

"You may come with me, if you choose," he continued; "I am going to see Rose Morley's child."

Robert followed him mechanically, his head reeling and his limbs tottering. Carl saw it, and drew his arm through his own, pressing it to his side with an earnest pressure. Whatever his own anxiety and terror might be, it could not equal in anguish and intensity that of Robert Waldron.

They reached the poor, dingy house, in which his child lived; and the over-worked servant opened the door to them. They had been expecting Mr. Bramwell and the young lady for some time, she said. No, the young lady had not come back yet. She had been there all day, nursing little Miss Hester, but she had left her in the evening to go to Mr. Bramwell's chapel, promising to return

as soon as she could. She had gone to the chapel, she was sure, for she had sent her own little sister to take her to the very door, where the young lady had gone in before she came away.

Carl and Robert looked at one another in mingled relief and wonder. They had traced Hester's movements up to the last half-hour; for if she had gone into the chapel, no doubt she had remained there till the end of the service. To be separated from her by no more than half-an-hour seemed a small thing. She would be coming in soon; perhaps she had missed her way a little. They lingered on the doorstep, looking up the street, until the girl asked if they wished to see the child, who would be glad enough of a visit from Mr. Bramwell.

"Let me see her, Carl," said Robert; entreatingly; "she need know nothing about me. If you have any pity for me in this hour, let me see her."

Carl hesitated for a moment; yet how could he refuse? What right had he to keep him away from her, when her mother was dead. For he had understood from Robert's hurried

explanation that Rose was already dead. He answered by a silent gesture to accompany him ; and both of them followed the servant to the room where the child lay.

The little girl had been raised upon her pillows, and sat with an eager face turned towards the door, listening to their approaching footsteps. Carl was the first to enter, and Robert stayed behind, in the background, looking on with a new sorrow in his heart. The face, a small, refined, patrician face, which had lost the look of childhood, was that of his mother in a miniature portrait she had given to him when she was dying. He knew it well, for in his boyhood he had studied the miniature by heart. But the child was speaking, and he could not bear to lose a word she said. She belonged to him. If Rose were dead, there was no other being in the world who bore any relationship to this forlorn little creature.

"Hester has been here all day," she said ; "the good, dear Hester that I'm named after. We love one another ever so ! She said she'd come back with you, and stay all night with me. Why did you not bring her, Mr. Bramwell ?"

"She will be here very soon," answered Carl.


"She says my mother is living with her in her house," continued Hester, in her plaintive and sweet voice; "and she knew my father, when she was a little girl like me. She loved him then, and he used to nurse her on his knees. But he never nursed me. He was dead before I was born."

"Don't think about it, my little Hester," said Carl, soothingly.

"But I'm always thinking of it," she answered, "because if he hadn't died, we should all have lived together somewhere; and I should have had my holidays, like other children. They say there are worse-off little girls in the streets; but they have all got homes, and mothers and fathers; and I have nobody, no home, and no father, and no one but my mother, who is so very poor she can scarcely ever come to see me. I shan't be sorry to die, if God pleases."

"Suppose your father had not died!" said Carl.

"Oh, how I would have loved him!" she cried, clasping her small hands together.



"Perhaps he would have played with me sometimes! It would not have mattered then how poor we were, if we had only lived together. The other Hester said he used to be very fond of little children, and he would have been sure to have loved me the most. Hester cannot tell whether he will know I am his little girl in heaven."

Robert stood by and listened. Every word was full of heart-breaking sorrow to him; yet the calmness and tenderness of this little child soothed him. He leaned his arm against the door-post, and rested his head upon it, weeping bitterly. His child heard him, and turned eagerly again towards the door.

"There is somebody there," she said; "and they are crying. Who is it, Mr. Bramwell? Don't leave them alone in the dark. Let them come in here."

It was no more than a step or two to her side, and Robert's failing feet trode them. He sank down beside her, as Hester had done in the morning, and hid his face in her pillow, while she laid her hand upon his head timidly, yet fondly.

"Don't cry," she said; "I'm not going to



die just yet; and if I do die I shall go to heaven and have my holidays. I don't know who you are; but I don't like to see you crying for me."

"Kiss me, little Hetty," he sobbed; and she laid her lips shyly upon his cheek, while he threw his arm round her with a passionate clasp.

"Tell me," he said; "where you have been living all this time, my little girl?"

"I have been all my life-long at school," she answered, pensively; "ever since I can remember. I belong to nobody."

"Nobody!" echoed Robert, in a voice as troubled as her own.

"Nobody, except my mother," she continued, "and she is very poor, and always full of trouble. The other Hester says she is going to take me away somewhere, and make me very, very happy. But it is too late, now."

"Too late!" repeated Robert, dropping his head again upon the pillow. She lay still and exhausted, her arm resting upon his neck; and Carl did not break the silence. What could he say that would be better than this silence? It was Robert who first looked up, and spoke.

“But she does not come, Carl,” he said, in a tone of undiminished anxiety. Carl was waiting, straining his ears to catch the sound of her voice in the house below. The time was fast getting on, and the night was drawing near. Could she have lost herself in the streets of London? Where too was John Morley, who had been missing since this time the night before? They were compelled to leave the child, inconsolable because Hester was not come back; and start afresh upon their vague search. They did not know where she had passed the last night; or whether she knew any one in London. There was no clue, no track. She had been near to them both only an hour or two ago, but they had not seen her. She might be close beside them still.

## CHAPTER XI.

### *ANOTHER HESTER.*


AT an early hour the next morning Carl and Robert went again to the boarding-school to inquire if anything had been heard of Hester. Upon receiving an answer in the negative, they did not know what further steps to take. They sent a telegram to Grant, cautiously worded; "We have had no success. Is there any change or any news?" The answer returned in the name of Annie Grant, by which they became aware that she shared the secret, was, "No change here, and no news." It reached them soon after midday on Monday. After this they visited the two railway stations at which John Morley could have arrived, and made some cautious inquiries; but they could gain no explicit information. At present they could not resolve to set a detective to seek him out. While Rose continued in so precarious a state, they dare not let any clue to the criminal slip out of their own hands. They could not believe it possible that they had left

London; for both John Morley and Hester would be as inexperienced as children, with regard to any journey, or any scheme of flight. Carl hoped every hour that they would be found at his lodgings; and they returned again and again to them to see if they had not arrived there.

On the Tuesday morning, Robert, who could no longer endure the suspense about Rose, determined to return to Little Aston, leaving Carl to continue his wary but close inquiries in London. He reached the little town in the afternoon, and though he dare not let himself be seen knocking at John Morley's door, which would have attracted the attention of the neighbours, he could not resist going past the house. It looked just as usual. The closed shutters of Rose's drawing-room were still closed; but what surprised and startled him the most was to see the shop open, as if John Morley were quietly pursuing his ordinary business. He crossed over quickly, and peered in through the windows, catching a glimpse of a withered face, which glared back upon him with tigerish eyes. The mystery was explained as soon as he reached Grant's house. Grant had resolved

to keep the townspeople in the dark as long as possible, and upon Monday morning he had installed Lawson behind the counter, bidding him do his best there to meet the requirements of the few customers. It was generally reported through the town that John Morley was suffering from a second attack of brain fever; which satisfactorily accounted for his non-appearance, and for Grant's constant attendance at his house. Rose was still in danger; but there was a brighter hope now than there had been twelve hours before. It was growing more and more possible that she might rally from the shock, and partially recover; but the recovery could be only partial.

Robert went on home,—to the home he had sauntered away from carelessly for an after-dinner stroll in the cool of the evening, on Saturday night. The prodigal whom Mr. Waldron had prepared for two years before, and who had disappointed him by his light-hearted gaiety, was going back to his father's house now, feeling that he was no more worthy. The famine had made itself felt at last, and he knew that he had nothing but husks to eat. All the wealth and the honour, the graces and luxuries



of his life hung ragged and threadbare about him. He yearned to see his father looking out for him, ready to have compassion upon him, and run, and fall on his neck and kiss him. His heart was very full of repentance, and of a longing after some love which should not look for any worthiness in him. But his father was nowhere to be seen, and he avoided meeting his sister. He bade the servant tell Mr. Waldron, when he came in, that he was in the library; and then he went there, threw himself upon a sofa, and fell into a troubled sleep, full of dreams. When he opened his eyes again, his father was standing by him, with a face of painful anxiety. If Carl had been struck by the change in his aspect, his father was ten times more so. This was no longer his handsome, debonair son; but a weary and worn man, who had been beaten somewhere in the battle of life. Robert had groaned, and his face had been sadly pained in his sleep, and he had been about to awaken him from his disturbed slumbers, just as he opened his eyes and looked up. "Father!" he said; "father!"

"My boy, Robert," said Mr. Waldron, his hard features quivering, and his voice faltering,

"what is it, my boy? Tell me everything. I am your father, an old man now, but I loved your mother with my whole heart, and I carried you in my arms when you were a baby. You may tell me. I am not hard towards you. I can bear anything from you. There is nobody loves you as your old father does. Speak to me, Robert, as a man talks with his friend."

Robert had had no very fixed purpose of concealment from Mr. Waldron, though he had told Grant that they must not let him know of John Morley's crime; and now, he could constrain himself no longer. He told him all, and his father listened, with a profound affection and compassion for him, which bound their hearts more closely the one to the other.

"You know everything now," he said, at the end; "what is to be done?"

"I am not so fearful for Hester as you are," said Mr. Waldron; "be sure that her father will do her no harm, if he be mad, and I suppose he must be mad. Yet he was not mad when he attacked you, Robert; he was as sane as he had been for many years. If Hester was safe with him after that she will be safe with him now."

"But where can they be hiding?" exclaimed Robert.

"We must find out," he answered. "Hester will go back to the school sooner or later to inquire after that little child. I know her well enough for that. Be comforted, my boy. All these things will work together for good to her, if not to you. You would be content with that?"

"Content! Yes," he said; "if Hester were safe and happy I could make myself content. Father, that little child will die!"

"No, no," exclaimed Mr. Waldron, "no, no. We will give her a fresh life, Robert. She must come here,—not here with your sister, I did not mean that,—but to Little Aston. Annie Grant would have her; yes, Annie would be like a mother to her; and I will give Grant a thousand pounds to make her strong again. She has your mother's face, you say? Oh, Robert! would to God I could own her as my grandchild!"


Mr. Waldron turned away and walked to the window, looking out on the terrace, and the trim lawn, with its gorgeous flower-beds, where no child had ever played with the flowers.



This little waif belonged to him, but he could have no pride in claiming her; yet he would make her life smooth and happy, God willing; she should know no shame or sorrow he could shield her from.

"We cannot own her," he said, at last; "for the child's own sake, she must never know, and no one else must know, her relationship to us. She must come as Annie's relative; and she will be near to us, and we can care for her; but we shall always keep a distance between us, that the world may suspect nothing. I must consult with Grant and Annie about it all."

"The only Hester who will belong to me," said Robert, with a pang of passing bitterness. Yet he was comforted and strengthened by his confidence to his father. They walked together in the evening to Grant's house, and found him at home, worn out but triumphant. There was scarcely a doubt in his mind now that Rose would not die from the blow she had received; indirectly it might hasten her death, as her health was delicate, and her life had not been a good one before, but she would certainly recover for a time. If they could only acquaint John Morley with this fact he might venture



home again, and the affair could be hushed up with Mr. Waldron's connivance. But the mystery of John Morley's flight remained as dark as ever; and there was settling down upon it that vague feeling of a thing accomplished and done with, which is stamped upon all the events of the past.

Grant and Annie listened gladly to Mr. Waldron's proposal to receive the little Hester into their house. The only difficulty would be with regard to Rose; but they decided that she must be kept in ignorance of the near neighbourhood of her child, until she was strong enough to bear it, and to be willing to see her only in secret, lest the suspicions of the townspeople should be awakened. It was necessary to remove the child from school, and as soon as she could travel with safety Grant and Annie went up to London to fetch her. But at the first glance Grant's keen eyes discovered the truth. They might bring her down to Little Aston, and warm her in the sunshine of gladness and childish joys; but the chill of death was upon her, and the warmth had come too late to save her. They carried her back with them with the utmost care; and Robert

Waldron went in to see her the day after she had been received into her new home.

"I know you again," said little Hester, receiving his kiss with quaint shyness, "you came the night the other Hester left me. She never, never came back to me. I am come here to have my holidays, and grow strong again. Do you think that I shall ever be strong enough to go back to school?"

"Not to that school," answered Robert, taking her upon his knee, and pressing her face to his.

"I never want to learn any more lessons," she whispered, "never again."

"You shall never learn any more," he promised, "but you shall have a pony to ride."

"I should be afraid of a pony," she said, stirring with joyous agitation in his arms.

"Not if I walked by you, and held you very safe," he answered; "my little girl would not be afraid then."

"I'm not your little girl," she said, plaintively, "I'm nobody's little girl."

"But I love you, and you will soon love me," he answered.

Yes," she said.

"You must love me more than anybody else, my little Hetty," said Robert, with a jealous desire to lay claim to the child's chief affection.

"Oh, I couldn't do that," she answered, frankly, "I could never do that. I love the other Hester more, and Carl. I call him Carl now, because he told me, He said Hester was the dearest name in all the world to him; and now he had lost the other Hester I was to belong to him. I am to write to him very often, when I am well enough; and I shall begin my letters 'My dear Carl.' What ought I to call you?"

He could not answer her, and he laid her down again upon the sofa, from which he had lifted her, arranging the cushions about her carefully, and with the most gentle hands. He came every day to see her; and so did Mr. Waldron, whose heart opened to her with the doting fondness of a grandfather. Very smooth and very soft was the path her little feet were treading, but it tended downward to the grave; though for some weeks no one knew it except Grant, who would not mar the slight consolation that came to Robert in this close attendance upon his little daughter.

One day, when the summer was finest, Robert took her with him to Aston Court, and the child's languid feet walked up and down the grassy length of the terrace with him. Mr. Waldron came up and took her away from him to show her the aviary ; and he heard his name called by his sister's authoritative voice.

" Who is that child, Robert ?" she inquired.

" You don't know ?" he said, in an accent of incredulity.

" No ; how should I ?" she asked. " But her face reminds me of some one. Who did you say she was ?"

" Rose Morley's child," he answered, in a hoarse whisper.

" Rose Morley's child !" she exclaimed, " but I never knew she had any child. I am sure nobody ever mentioned it to me. Wherever has she been all this time ?"

" Sister," said Robert, " the child is mine."

Miss Waldron gazed into his face, with an expression of bewilderment ; then a faint and tardy blush tinged her cheek, and her eyelids fell. She began instantly to wonder what would be the most befitting course for her to adopt.

" Robert," she said, sternly, " your sin has

indeed found you out ! I hope you feel how vile a sinner you are ! But I will act the part of a sister, a Christian sister, and take charge of that child of sin and shame, and see to her welfare for time and eternity. On condition, however, that you give her up to me entirely, and never see her again."

Miss Waldron ceased, with an air of self-commendation. She expected her brother to acknowledge her generosity thankfully ; but he did not answer her immediately, and when he did it was in broken and faltering sentences.

" I should like her to be happy," he said ; " I wish her to be good. I want her to learn about God after a different fashion to my own learning. She must be with some one as merciful and tender as Christ was upon the earth."

" And I ?" gasped Miss Waldron.


" You are not that," he said ; " you are nothing like that. God knows how utterly selfish my life has been ; but not more than yours, not more selfish than yours in its good deeds. I don't believe you love anybody besides yourself. You know it. Whom have you loved ? No ; I could not give the care of the child to you."

Miss Waldron stared at him with stony eyes.

It had never happened to her to have her piety questioned; she had never questioned it herself. And here was her unregenerate brother hinting with bare effrontery that she was not the favourite daughter of heaven.

"If any one is near to the very heart of Christ," continued Robert, "it is Hester. She is not for ever brooding over her own soul; but she cares for others, she loves others. It is when I think she might have loved me, that I feel my sin has indeed found me out."

Miss Waldron would listen to him and his profane words no longer. She retired with unbending dignity to her room, where she locked herself in before giving way to her emotions. The only relief she could think of was to pour them out into the sympathising heart of David Scott, whose deafness was such as to make writing the easiest mode of communicating the infinite varieties and minute shades of her inner life. The tears flowed down upon her paper, and impeded her progress; but she did not lay aside her pen, until she had written sixteen pages, worthy of being published in her memoirs, when her life should be written for the benefit of unborn generations.



## CHAPTER XII.

### *THREE MONTHS' SUSPENSE.*

By-and-by some inkling of the truth began to ooze out in Little Aston. Nobody suspected the existence of Rose, who was half-living, half-dying in the house, tended by the old Frenchwoman with singular fidelity ; but it became generally believed that instead of John Morley being ill with fever, neither he nor Hester were dwelling in their own house. The sagacity of Little Aston was at no loss to account for their absence. It had been long known that John Morley was deeply involved in debt, and without doubt he was in hiding somewhere from his creditors. As soon as this report gained universal credence, Mr. Waldron came forward as the principal creditor, holding a mortgage upon the house, and undertook to satisfy all other claims, on condition that everything was left to him. He closed up the shop, put the place into the joint guardianship of Lawson's mother, and the poor woman to whom, it was well known, Hester had given a shelter in the out-



buildings ; and there, as far as the townspeople were concerned, the matter rested.

There were some points in the life inside the house which struck Grant as peculiar. He could hold very little conversation with Madame ; and he could not altogether account for her extraordinary and faithful attendance upon Rose all through the crisis of her illness, and during the longer and more tedious weeks of her convalescence. Madame could never be persuaded to leave her charge, and when she consented to take her necessary sleep, she would only lie down upon a bed she extemporised upon the floor, in one corner of the room. She insisted, with urgency, upon having chains placed upon the doors, even those inside the dwelling ; yet when Grant proposed that Lawson should take up his quarters there, she shrugged her shoulders, and shook her head in vehement dissent. But as soon as Rose was able to speak, and to speak fluently to her in her own language, it was easier to understand Madame's attachment to her ; and in the course of a short time Grant's perplexity passed out of his mind.


It was some weeks before Rose seemed to awake to anything like consciousness of her

own state and circumstances, and afterwards she passed most of her time in a lethargic stupor. Possibly the blow she had suffered had in some manner injured her brain; but now and then her mind appeared to rouse itself from its torpor, with the keener vigilance and activity for its long slumber. She could give no information with regard to the evening when she was hurt, beyond saying that she had heard no sound and seen no one approach her before being struck by the stealthy blow; and that she instantly lost all consciousness. But she appeared willing to lie still in her listless debility, without asking any questions concerning her husband, in whose house she knew herself to be; and whenever she inquired after Hester, she was easily pacified with an evasive answer.

This mental languor, with its rare intervals of activity, lasted until she was well enough to leave her bed and sit up in Hester's little study. There was no need for her now to return to the old nursery. She saw no one but Grant and Lawson's mother. Mr. Waldron bade Grant feel no hesitation in supplying her with any luxury which could soften her hard

lot; but Rose was indifferent to those luxuries, which had once seemed to her feeble and self-indulgent nature the chief good. In the gradual and partial recovery of her mind, she began to grow restless and unquiet, an excitement which Grant dreaded for her. It was Carl she wanted, she said, day after day, whenever she roused herself to take any notice of him; and after some delay Grant sent for Carl.

For Carl, Hester's disappearance was the chief and most absorbing circumstance of all that had occurred in this concealed drama of life at Little Aston. He put numberless advertisements in the daily papers, so worded that if they met her eye she could not fail to understand them, and be touched by their anxiety and distress. He reproached himself with bitterness that he had not confessed his love to her, and if she loved him, that he had not bound her to himself by a delicate and light yoke of duty which her conscience would have acknowledged. If she had been betrothed to him, his promised wife, she would, above all, have owned the allegiance and fealty of affection due to him. But he had left her free, or rather, knowing Hester as he did, he had made it im-



possible for her to fly to him, while he was yet dumb and gave no voice to his love for her. He could not believe that she and her father had left London ; and every woman's figure at all resembling Hester's stirred every fibre of his heart. He would see it afar off, hurry to get level with it, cast his eyes upon the face, with a wild and forlorn hope, and then turn away, or pass on with an indescribable heart-sinking. As day after day wore away, and week after week, bringing no news of Hester, he grew terrified, exasperated at the long suspense. A mournful, almost reckless despondency took possession of him. His co-pastor, a man who had found his way into the tranquillity and serenity of old age, and his church, very busy with its own cares, said he was overtasking and irritating his brain ; and when Grant's summons came for him to go down to Little Aston, his deacons advised him to take a holiday of two or three weeks.

It was three months now since John Morley had taken his flight from Little Aston, and no trace had been discovered of him. Carl entered the town with a feeling of despair, and like Robert Waldron, went first to walk past the

house before going up to Grant's home. It was dismal, silent; like a grave, only more empty than a grave. A mystery hung about it, and made it blacker than it was before. He saw Lawson, smaller, more shrivelled, more palsied, prowling about the pavement, and looking up to the closed windows as if seeking some mode of entrance. He called to him, in the subdued voice of one who fears to disturb a quiet place, and Lawson came close up to him, gazing with his keen but sunken eyes into his face. "Do you know everything?" he asked.

"Everything," answered Carl. "Where can Hester be, Lawson?"

"You love her?" he said, sharply.

"As I love my own soul!" exclaimed Carl, passionately. "I would save her from sorrow as I would save myself from sin."

"I know nothing about them," said Lawson, in a tone of surly and dogged temper; "but it's my notion that Robert Waldron knows. He's the devil."

He turned quickly round, and went as swiftly as his tottering limbs would carry him up the street; while Carl walked sadly away towards his sister's house.

His arrival had been anticipated all the day, for his sister and the child Hester had thought and talked of nothing else. Annie had put the finishing touches to his room with her own hands ; and Hester had been carried there by Grant to place upon the dressing-table a pin-cushion upon which she had marked with pins the word "Carl." She had to be carried up and down stairs now ; and the pony, which had occasionally borne her quietly along the lanes and across Aston Court Park, had not been mounted for some days past, though it was brought to the door every morning, that she might look at it with her pensive and gentle smile. Yet the chill shadow of her formal and unnatural life was passing away, and her smile was gayer, and her weak laughter more ready. She was sitting restfully upon Robert Waldron's knee, with her head lying upon his shoulder, when Carl entered, and with a shrill yet feeble cry of delight, she stretched out both her arms to him.

"You love Carl best still," said Robert, mournfully, when she was transferred to his arms, and was looking up into his face with eyes of vivid and childish joy.

"He knew me first," said the child, "long and long before you knew me. I couldn't help loving him best. Have you found the other Hester yet, Carl?"

"Not yet," he answered, kissing the child's quivering mouth.

"I should like you to find her before I die," she said, with a long-drawn sigh of anxiety. "You won't be so sorry for me if you have her."

"There is no clue to them yet," said Robert, in a hopeless tone.

"I have a fancy," answered Carl, "that if I could see Hester's home again, some intimation might come to me,—some inspiration, I may as well call it,—to lead me to where she may be found. It is nothing but a superstition, but it is there in my mind."

"I will go with you to-morrow," said Robert.

Carl looked up steadily at him with an expression of surprise and inquiry. He did not know whether he had ever seen Rose since the time when he and Grant had been summoned by Madame to her aid. Before the child, who was listening with eager curiosity, he could ask question. Little Hester turned her earnest eyes also towards Robert.

"Is the other Hester's home near here?" she asked of him.

"Yes," he said.

"Then you know her?" she continued.

Robert nodded, for his only reply.

"And you never spoke of her to me," she went on, reproachfully, "not when I told you all about her. You never said you knew her. I told you that she said my poor mother was gone to live with her, and you never told me it was somewhere near here. It was not kind to me. I might have seen my mother. O Carl, take me with you to-morrow to see my mother."


She was too weak to cry aloud, but the silent tears ran down her cheeks, and she sobbed quietly to herself as she hid her face against Carl's breast. Robert could endure his own pain no longer. The child's preference for Carl,—his own child,—stung him to the quick; yet he controlled all token of his natural jealousy. He kissed the small thin palm which hung listlessly down by Hester's side, and pressed Carl's hand warmly. Then with a great grief and hunger in his heart he went out into the night, and walked home slowly through deep darkness.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### AN INSPIRATION.

CARL and Robert went first to John Morley's house with Grant, when he called to see Rose the next morning. While he prepared her gently for the excitement of seeing Carl, the latter accompanied Robert through every other part of the house. Madame was with them, and availed herself of the opportunity to give her tongue play. Her son, she told them, had had an access of his malady since last night, and had taken an unusually strong dose of opium, the effects of which had not worked off. His attic was unoccupied, and there was now no trace of work in it. Hester's seat was still in its place in the broad dormer window; but it was covered with dust, as was also the binding-press. A press-pin lay in one corner, as if it had been flung there hastily; it was rusty, but when Carl stooped to pick it up, a singular revulsion, possible to a sensitive temperament like his, caused him to shrink from touching it. His face was white when he turned



away, and he hastened to quit the work-room. Downstairs the old Frenchwoman had cleaned and put everything into a cold desolate order, altogether unlike the warm living displacement and disarrangement of a house which has inmates. Carl looked about him with a chill sense of disquiet and disappointment. He felt that he should gain no hint of Hester from these rooms, empty, swept, and garnished. It had been a superstition,—one of those superstitions which are apt to follow closely in the track of a passionate love; and though he half-laughed at himself, he gave it up with reluctance.

By the time they had gone through all the deserted rooms, Rose was ready to receive Carl. He found her calm almost to apathy, until, as if she suddenly recollected why she had wished to see him, she began to speak about her child. Then Carl, who had been warned by Grant to avert from her as far as possible any extreme agitation, judged it to be best to tell her the whole truth at once.

“She is here, in Little Aston,” he said, in a tone of singular sweetness, which soothed her feverish disquietude; “my sister Annie has charge of her, and I am come from her this

morning to you. If you will only control yourself, there is no reason why she should not come here to see you."

"At Little Aston!" murmured Rose; "here, close to me! Oh, how good you are! My little Hetty! I hunger and thirst to see her. Sometimes I am not quite sure which little Hetty it is. Are you sure, quite sure, that I have been a very sinful woman, and that I am not a silly giddy girl like I used to be? Which am I, Carl?"

He was silent, looking at her with grave, pitiful eyes; and Rose turned her face away from him. "I know," she said with a sigh; "yet I think the sinful woman is nearer to God than the giddy girl was. Will you let Hetty come to me to-day?"

"She shall certainly come," answered Carl, gently; "but I must tell you something about her. The world would be very cold and cruel for your little girl."

"Oh! I know," she cried. "My darling! my poor darling! And it is I who have done it! And I can do nothing to take away that shame. Oh, what shall I do? Carl, is there any help for a wrong like this?"

"Yes," he said ; "God can repair this wrong. He is about to do it. But there is only one way by which a wrong like this can be set right. The world would be too cold and cruel for her, and He is about to take her out of the world."

"She is going to die!" said Rose, quietly; closing her weary eyes, and leaning back against the pillows which supported her. She lay quite still and silent for some minutes, and a few tears stole slowly down her cheeks. Then she spoke again eagerly.


"She must come here at once, my poor little darling!" she said. "Nobody could tend her and love her as I will. She is my own, Carl. See, I will have the little bed Hester used to sleep in put up in the drawing-room. It is a large room, and the sun shines upon it most of the day. It used to be such a pleasant room! I am quite strong enough to nurse my own child, though I am going to die too, not very long hence. Oh, how good God is! How He puts things right! And you are good to me, too, dear Carl. What should I have done without you? What would have become of me and my poor little Hetty? Oh Carl, Carl, how very good you are to me!"

She broke into vehement sobs, though she tried to smile; while she caressed his hand with her own, and would have raised it to her lips.

"Hush!" said Carl; "hush! You must not excite yourself. Hester shall come."

"The poor child!" said Rose, softly to herself. "Oh, nobody knows what her life has been. I am glad she is going home to God. Why, I only saw her twice till she was six years old; and since then I could count the days she has been with me. That is not like other children, who are always with their mother; and nobody can love a child as its own mother does. My love! my darling! I wonder if she is much altered. She was always very small and delicate, and she never had any childish ways about her; but how could she, living always in a school with strangers? Shall I be strong enough to nurse her on my lap, Carl? Will Mr. Grant only let me have her sometimes just for a minute on my own lap? If you will let me lean on your arm, I could show you at once how nice the drawing-room would be for her."

She spoke so urgently that Carl did not know how to refuse her. He raised her from her




chair, and put his arm round her to support her; her new deep joy lending her strength. The drawing-room, like the rest of the house, had been put to rights; and, except the faded colour of the furniture, there remained no traces of the dust accumulated during the many years it had been closed. The shutters towards the street were not opened, but the window looking upon the little garden admitted the autumn sunshine freely. Rose directed her feeble steps towards it.

“Here,” she said, “the bed shall stand, where it is bright and pleasant; and the room is large; she can walk about in it well, when she is too ill to go out of doors. Oh Carl, you don’t know how proud and happy I was when I was getting this room ready!”

She spoke in an accent of such poignant anguish, that Carl could scarcely keep back his tears. But this memory of the past was gone from her in an instant; and all at once remembering that there would be much to do to prepare the place for her child to die in, she hurried him away, telling him that he must bring her little Hester there before the night closed.

Robert was waiting for him in John Morley's parlour, still in conversation with Madame Lawson, who seemed unable to part with milord Waldron. She arrested them even at the door, to give utterance to a last speech, which Carl could not understand.

"Be of good heart, milord," she said, "the little one will come back. Ah, how I miss her! She could speak French like a French-woman. She was so sweet, so gentle, so sage! Like a little angel of the good God. There is nobody to talk to me now of Burgundy, and my little town Ecquemenville. She would talk to me for hours of monsieur the curé, and monsieur the doctor, and my friend, the widow Limet. She knew the place like what you call a map; for I built it for her one day with books,—a big book for the church, and the town-hall, and the house of the mayor, and little books for the smaller houses. Here was the place, and there the market, and yonder the fountain. Oh, the little one knew it very well! She knew all our patois, milord, as if she had been born there. I used to call her my little daughter of Burgundy, and I said to her each day, 'Go, go, my cherished one, my angel; the




sun shines there as it shines never in this bad country.' But I have no one to talk to me of Burgundy now."

Robert started, and turned to look at Carl, who was waiting impatiently to get away, and whose careworn face remained blank. The inspiration had come, but not to Carl. It was to Robert that the old Frenchwoman's words gave a clue which appeared likely to lead him to the discovery of the fugitives. If Hester and John Morley had left England, a conclusion which had become almost a positive conviction with him, what place would they be more likely to choose for concealment than this distant, unknown, yet to Hester, familiar town in Burgundy? If they had been in London, or even in Paris, argued Robert, they could not have failed to see the English papers; and if Carl's numerous advertisements had escaped them, they must have known from the absence of all news concerning any murder at Little Aston, that in some way or other John Morley's crime had missed the ordinary results. He could come to no other conclusion than that they had fled to some region beyond the circulation of any news from England; and



the small insignificant town of Ecquemonville would be precisely such a place. It was there Hester would be found. This little town, hidden among the vineyards of Burgundy, busy with its own small interests, with no frequent communication with the rest of the world, and quickly adopting a stranger into its own narrow circle,—Hester must be there. The old selfishness,—a selfishness which he had been victoriously trampling under his feet for the last three months, rose up again strong and mighty. He would find Hester himself, saying nothing to Carl of this new, faint hope. Hester should owe to him all the help and consolation she could receive in her peculiar position of desolation and distress.

At Grant's door he stopped, declining to go in; for already his heart burned with a passionate desire to be upon the road, at the end of which he expected to find Hester. There was not even a vague hope within him that he should ever win her. He knew that upon the path he had to travel through life there was a point where the cross stood, upon which must be crucified his lost love, his lost hope. But he could not relinquish the sweetness of finding



Hester himself alone; it might be the last sweetness and joy he should taste in all his intercourse with her. His love for her, deepened and purified by all these later sorrows, must never seek satisfaction,—except the satisfaction to which he had always been a stranger: that of surrendering itself, and consenting to be sacrificed to the happiness of the beloved one. But it was coming gradually to this in Robert's spirit; and with set face and heart he travelled towards the threatening cross, only asking to gather one little flower at its foot.

“I am going away for a day or two, Carl,” he said, pressing his hand convulsively; “I shall be back soon. Take care of my little Hetty. She will not miss me now you are here.”


He hurried home and wrote a short note to his father, saying that he was going away upon business, for he did not wish to subject himself to any questioning; and with very little other preparation he set out by the first train on his journey to Burgundy.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### *IN THE SUNSHINE.*

JOHN MORLEY was in the condition of a man who has been dwelling underground for so long a period that he has almost forgotten the glory of the upper world. For him, in his gloomy and abandoned home, there had been no sweet influences of sunshine and breeze, no change of season, no opening of leaf-buds, no soft starry fall of snow. He had obstinately closed his senses to all the healing agencies of nature; and with almost greater obstinacy he had steeled himself against the tender energy of religion. He had been voluntarily sojourning in "a land of darkness, as darkness itself, and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness."

Perhaps the first thing necessary for him was to reawaken his sensibility towards outer influences. Grant had from the first recognised this necessity, and had urged him to take a long walk daily in the beautiful neighbourhood surrounding Little Aston. But John Morley



had not the moral courage and strength to break out of the dungeon where he was kept by Giant Despair. It was needful that the angels should lay hold upon him and bring him forth, and set him without the gates.

He was free then at last. He had come up from the depths. The wonderful sunshine of Burgundy dazzled him, but he felt its warmth and its light penetrate to the very core of his heart. The great fountain of life sent electric currents through all his numbed veins. He could not think at first,—he was too bewildered. It was enough to stand by and look on with newly-opened eyes at the moving panorama surrounding him. Everything was new to him, and removed him by its novelty from the sorrowful memories of his old life. He scarcely spent an hour indoors from early in the morning until the last bell rung at ten o'clock, when all the inhabitants of Ecquemontville thought it the right thing to retire peacefully into their own chambers. When he was weary of gazing up into the marvellous blue of the sky, he turned his rapt attention to the vineyards, where the grapes were deepening every day into a more purple tint. In the boulevards

of the little town, which was almost deserted by the people, he spent every noontide in the shadow of its green aisle; with the trees growing thickly on each side, and only opening here and there to give a glimpse of the shining waters of the river lapping against their deep-struck roots. As the fierce heat of the sun declined, he would return to the streets, where the inhabitants turned out of their dwellings in the cool of the evening to chatter and gossip, or flirt with all the gaiety and light-heartedness of the people of a warm climate. He was never tired of watching the groups which gathered on the pavements before the doors of the houses, who saluted him as he passed to and fro, with the grace and politeness of their country, —a politeness which he acknowledged with a strange smile upon his face. He could not understand a word they said, but this only added to the charm. Was he indeed the same sorrow-stricken man, whose dishonour had been upon every tongue, and who had had to shrink from the glance of every eye? He did not even ask himself this question; he was too full of the novelty of the present moment.

Besides all this, he would come in at meal-

times with a wholesome hearty appetite for the dainties the widow Limet provided for him and Hester. The widow Limet was put upon her mettle. She believed firmly that the English lived solely upon raw beef-steak and strong ale ; and now that she had two of these benighted barbarians under her roof, she was fired with an ardent resolution to show them the mysteries and marvels of French cooking. Such friandises, such omelettes, such soups, such gâteaux, she placed upon the table, as would have made a gourmand's mouth water. She regretted sorely that it was not the season for the delicate vineyard snails, which were sold for a penny a-piece, even in the economical town of Ecquemonville, that she might have set a ragoût of them before monsieur and mademoiselle. For the honour of their country her neighbours picked out the finest of their fruit for the foreigners, and presented it in lavish profusion. From his first meal in the morning, consisting of a bowl of rich milk into which was poured a cupful of the very essence of coffee, with a dainty new-baked roll added to it ; to his dinner at seven o'clock, with its four or five courses and generous

wines, John Morley was fed upon the choicest of food. Diet makes a marvellous difference in a man's spiritual condition ; and Hester, with her wise, observant eyes, learned some lessons in Ecquemenville which she would have failed to gather from the ascetic fare and lenten nutriment of their former mode of life.

But none of these outer things had the same influence over Hester. Her mind had not been suffering from a long malady, and could not therefore enjoy the almost sensuous pleasures of the change which was bringing health to her father. She was devoted to him ; but, in spite of her devotion, her heart clung with bitter strength to the love of her own country, the love of old familiar places, the love, scarcely acknowledged, of Carl. She did not think willingly of the last. They were separated by a miserable and irrevocable destiny. At times she was almost glad that no stronger tie bound them together than mere friendship,—a friendship, also, more implied than professed. If he had loved her, her duty would have been divided, but now it belonged solely to her father. What the final end of their present strange life would be,

she could not by any effort foresee. Not a whisper reached them from that far-off place where all her years had been passed. Could it be possible that the course of events was going on as usual in Little Aston, which for her was as the buried cities of ancient times? Were the streets there still? Was her old home, the only home she had ever known, yet standing in its dark northern corner, where the sun never shone upon it? Was the chapel open Sunday after Sunday; and did the church bells chime as they were wont to do?

Hester's favourite place for indulging in these mournful questionings was the cool, lofty, solemn interior of the fine old church of Ecquemenville. She chose a chair for herself, where she was half hidden by a pillar; and there she sat, hour after hour, letting all the pageantry of Catholic ceremonials pass before her, but paying no heed to it. She heard the organs answering to one another in grand volumes of sound, which made her tremble, but she never asked herself why it was so. The worshippers respected the pale young Englishwoman, whose ascetic, saint-like beauty was in harmony with their own worship. No



one spoke to her; a few offered her the holy water on the tips of their fingers as she passed in and out, and felt repaid by the sudden light in her grey eyes as she recognised the courtesy. She was adopted by them with a silent adoption; and the curé, a venerable old man, who had no intention of making a convert of her, regarded her with a profound interest, which only waited for an opportunity to shape itself into language.


The vintage came, with its deepened mirth and hilarity; and John Morley's force and energy had returned to him almost as if he had never wasted them in morbid brooding; but Hester's silent longings were growing day by day more enfeebling. The fine balance of health was disturbed by her ceaseless conjectures as to both past and future. She had never renewed her conversation with her father about the circumstances of the night preceding their hurried flight from England. Rose was dead; and amid her other troubled thoughts, it seemed very nearly a relief to think of her as one who has made the final escape from the evils of life. But she could not be sure that her father's hand was not guilty of her

death. He had said it was not so ; but his reason had been so shaken at the time, that she could not trust implicitly to his word or memory. She could not yet gather courage to question him again. But who could be guilty, if not he ? It would be impossible to return to England, for their flight had fixed the crime upon him. If they ever set foot again in their native land, he would be called upon to expiate the death of Rose, either as a murderer or a madman. Oh, the exile ; the terrible banishment ! A home-sickness laid its chilly hand upon her ; and she felt that no life, however bright or joyous, could wean her from the yearning to see her own people, and hear her own language once again.

Long before reaching Ecquemonville, Robert Waldron knew his quest was successful. The driver of the diligence, to whom it seemed an extraordinary thing to have another Englishman as a passenger in so short a time after the arrival of John Morley and Hester, informed him that two of his compatriots had made Ecquemonville their residence since the beginning of June. On being questioned, he described them, as a man, with very white

hair, and seemingly of great age ; and a young lady, his daughter, very pretty, very amiable, and very sad. Robert could not doubt that these were the two he was seeking ; and his heart throbbed, as it had not done for some time past, with a feeling of satisfaction and happiness. Every step of the road brought him nearer to Hester, to whom he was carrying glad tidings. Whatever she had thought of her father's deed, it must be an infinite relief to her to hear that he had again escaped being guilty of a dark and cardinal sin. The way home was open to them ; they could return to it at any hour they pleased. He could not fail to be welcome, with such consolation as this.

Hester was sitting at her window, with her arms resting on the sill, looking listlessly down upon the dull street and market-square, which seemed stamped ineffaceably upon her brain. The diligence came in, and she saw the group of laundresses round the fountain pause as usual at their work, and the loungers throng round the conveyance, hiding the only traveller who descended from it. She was very heart-sick this afternoon ; and all this was nothing



to her except one more scene in the shifting panorama of the streets. But an hour afterwards, as she still sat there, silent, spiritless, half broken-hearted, the stranger appeared on the uneven pavement below, coming swiftly towards her, with upraised face, and eyes fastened upon her. Hester caught convulsively at the window-sill, and leaned forward with a fascinated and incredulous gaze. Her father was in the room behind her, reading the only English book in their possession, a New Testament which she had carried from little Hester's bedroom to Carl's chapel; and here, in the street below, close at the door, was Robert Waldron, who had seen her, knew her, and was hastening towards her.

Hester laid her head down upon the hands which grasped the window-sill, and felt an overwhelming, unutterable tremor of suspense. She could neither stir nor speak to give warning to her father; a vain warning it would have been, for already Robert's foot was upon the winding staircase which led up to their room. A cry only broke from her benumbed lips; but it was so smothered, that her father did not hear it. Step by step, each one adding to the

intense strain upon her, came the approaching tread ; and seemed to tarry at the door as if to lengthen out her anguish. She heard her father lay his book down, and knew that he was looking up to see who was coming. Then the door opened, and they stood face to face.

John Morley and Robert Waldron stood face to face, both alike stricken dumb. It was so long since they had seen one another thus directly, and so many changes had passed over both, that they recognised each other more by intuition than by positive recollection. There was so much also to be uttered by each of them that speech seemed altogether insufficient and powerless. They looked into one another's eyes, and no other gaze read the changeful, lamentable story of the past, as it flitted across their memories, and looked out in mournful glances at each other's face. Hester did not dare to lift her head, and look at them. She was waiting, shrinkingly, to catch the first word.

“ You have pursued and found me ! ” cried John Morley at last, in a voice which sounded clearly and coldly through the room, and fell in icy tones upon her ear.

"God forbid that I should harm you!" said Robert Waldron, in tremulous accents. "I come as your friend."

"Do you know what you have done for me?" asked John Morley again, after a long pause, as if both had exhausted themselves in the utterance of the first few words. "Let me tell you what you have done. I loved Rose as I never loved Hester's mother. I loved her with infatuation; with idolatry; against the voice of my conscience, against the voice of the church, against the inward voice of God. I knew she would bring no strength, no real joy to me, yet I loved her. I loved her as Adam loved Eve, when he bartered paradise and righteousness for her. You never loved her one-half, one-tenth as much."

"I never loved her at all," muttered Robert, unconscious of his own words.

"She might have learned to love me," he continued, mournfully, "she would at least have remained faithful to me, if you had not come between us. Because she was very fair to look upon, and facile to temptation, you tempted her, and I lost her. Yet you say you never loved her!"

•

"I was no better than a boy," answered Robert, urging the plea that had often soothed himself.

"A boy!" exclaimed John Morley, with a lifetime of agony in his voice; "a boy! and Rose gave me up for you! Yet I know not which love was the greater sin, yours or mine. I lavished upon her an inordinate love. We both wronged the feeble creature by our passion, you and I."

"If it be possible for you to forgive me," cried Robert, "forgive me now."

"Forgive you!" he repeated; "ay, I have forgiven you both. God knows I forgave her before I found that she was dead."

"She is not dead," said Robert, in a hoarse voice, which almost failed him. Low as it was, it reached Hester's ear, and she turned quickly round to see his face. How changed he was! how little like the gay, self-pleased, handsome man she had last seen! He was looking at her father, almost unconscious of her presence, and his expression was one of poignant shame and remorse.

"Not dead!" echoed John Morley. "I laid her down, as gently as I could, upon her own

little sofa, in her own room ; but I tell you she was dead."

"We found her there," answered Robert. "Lawson's mother called Grant and me in, and she lay there like one dead ; but there was life yet, and she is living now."

"Come here to me, Hester," cried John Morley ; "let me hold your hand."

In an instant she was at his side, her arm about his neck, and her lips pressed again and again to his face. She could not speak at first, in her sudden excess of gladness. Rose was not dead, not murdered ; and she saw clearly how free they were once more to return to England, to go back to Little Aston, to enter the old home again. She laid her head upon her father's shoulder, and sobbed, "Thank God !"

"How can it be ?" said John Morley, in a tone of almost incredulous wonder.

"I will tell you," answered Robert, hurriedly ; "the blow had just missed its most fatal aim, as it had done with me. You had but barely failed to kill her, as you missed murdering me two years ago."

"Me !" cried John Morley. "I desired to



injure neither of you. I never lifted up my hand against one or the other."

Robert Waldron made no answer; he was scarcely surprised at John Morley's denial; but Hester looked up into her father's face, and spoke entreatingly.

"Let us speak openly to one another now," she urged. "You remember the stranger whom Grant brought into our house almost dead, about two years ago. Oh, you knew who it was, and who had struck that frightful blow? It was Robert Waldron, father. Did you not know it was Robert Waldron?"

"Stop," he answered, raising his hand to his head; "let me think all this over a little while."

They waited for a minute or two in unbroken silence, hearing the distant chatter of the laundresses about the fountain, and the tattoo of a drum being beaten at a great distance off. Hester had sunk down on her knees beside her father, and rested her head against his arm. She could hardly endure the suspense, but she controlled herself; while Robert stood by, patient and immovable, willing to give John Morley what time he chose to collect his thoughts.

"I dare not think of it for long, even now,"

he said, his face, which had taken a hue of health, growing pale once more ; “but listen to me, and I will speak as I would speak before God. I never knew till this moment that you had been under my roof. It was well I did not know. You had promised faithfully that you would never enter the street where I dwelt.”

“I broke that promise,” said Robert, as John Morley paused.

“It never came into my mind that you could break a solemn promise like that ; the only penalty I demanded from you. I wished you no harm ; I only wished to be left to my sorrow and dishonour. How Rose came there I do not know to this day. I believed Hester was gone to London to see her dying ; and at first a superstition came across me. I could not help supposing that her spirit had come back to the home she had so cruelly and shamefully abandoned. How could Rose be there in the body ?”

“Father,” said Hester, “she was the poor creature we gave shelter to in the old nursery. She came to me one night as I left the chapel, poor, homeless, very ill, without hope in the

world; and I remembered the promise you made me take long ago, before you married her, that I would be as her very own child to her. Don't you recollect? What else could I do for her?"

"Recollect!" said John Morley; "ay, I recollect. I understand it all now."

"I did right!" she murmured.

"Right!" he repeated, laying his hand fondly on her head; "you are always right, my daughter."

"We will talk about it at another time," he continued, after a brief silence. "It is too painful for me still. You say that she is alive, that no murder has been committed at all. Where is she now?"

"She is at home," answered Robert, and John Morley shook a little at the words; "we could not move her then, nor yet. She is still very feeble. What would you have had us do with her, when she was on the point of death?"

"That is enough," he said; "leave us now."

Robert looked sadly from him to Hester, and from Hester to him again. They were occupied with one another, and could spare no thought for him. Whatever they had to say to each other, whatever resolves and plans they

might make, they wished to do it in his absence. He felt a vehement yearning to touch Hester's hand, to see her look at him once more, and to hear her speak to him ; but she was clinging to her father, looking into his face, and speaking to him broken words of gladness. He found that he had no right there any longer, though he had been the messenger of the glad tidings ; and with a quiet farewell, which scarcely fell upon their inattentive ears, he left them alone with one another and their new joy.

## CHAPTER XV.

### *WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.*


ROBERT WALDRON lingered a day or two, lounging about the dull little town, but not daring to force himself again into the presence of John Morley, unless he gave some sign that a second interview would be welcome. He had expected that they would have returned at once to England, but no places were taken in the diligence; and he could not make up his mind to leave them there with an uncertainty as to what they meant to do. He wished to see Hester alone, but now she accompanied her father everywhere that he went. The sultry heat of the summer was quite gone, and the clear bright autumn air breathed fresh exhilaration into veins which had grown languid through the fervour of the sunshine. Robert could see them from his window at the hotel whenever they quitted the house: John Morley, with a new vigour and strength, his white head held erect, his tread firm and steady; and Hester, herself again, yet more than her former self, hopeful, bright, and

courageous, ready to face any future, now that the heavy pressure of exile was passing away. What could they be about to do? He was undergoing a sore travail of heart, crucifying his best and most cherished hope. The gulf between him and Hester was too wide now, even to his own eyes, for it ever to be bridged over; and he was striving to look across it, with a willingness to see her happy in an Eden to which he could find no entrance.

At last he bethought himself that he must go. The Hester who belonged to him was pining away in Little Aston, and he knew that she would soon be lost to him for ever. Every hour that he wasted here, he lost some small tender trace of his child's character, which would be all that remained to him of her in a little while. Carl would be with her, he thought, bitterly, and Carl was loved more dearly than he was. Yet for his own sake he should be near her, to work out the whole of the heavy penance. But he could not leave without one effort to see Hester again, and to ask if he could render no help to her or her father. Fortunately he saw John Morley start out alone, the third evening after his interview with him,

and make his way towards the rock which overlooked the town ; and in a few minutes afterwards he presented himself at the widow Limet's door.

The widow Limet was giving Hester a lesson in spinning, in the dark cool room at the back of her shop, and the burr of the wheel made his step inaudible. He trode cautiously, and looked in through the half-open door for some time, glad to see Hester, while he remained unseen. Her face had caught a tinge of colour, the richer bloom of a warm climate, and her eyes had brightened from their long period of gloom. She smiled more readily and talked more gaily, but still with an air of gravity, as if laughter had been too long a stranger to her lips to play about them as about other girlish faces. He fancied, but it could only have been fancy, that she had borrowed some of the coquettish graces of the country-women about her ; her dress, the slight toss of her pretty head, the movement of her little foot upon the treadle, her whole attitude, had just the touch of careless consciousness of beauty which was the only charm she had needed. He knew now how well she would have played her part in his life of luxury and



elegance ; and he stood watching her, his heart contracting with a very bitter regret when the widow Limet caught sight of him, and betrayed his presence by a little vivacious shriek.

"I am about to return to England," he said, advancing with the pleasant graciousness of manner which he had at command ; "and I called to inquire if mademoiselle or her father have any commission there. For heaven's sake, Hester," he added, addressing her in English, "let me speak to you once more before I go. I cannot leave you thus."

"You can speak to me here," she answered ; "no one will understand you but me."

She had pushed aside her spinning-wheel, and risen to offer him her hand, which he had not touched for so long a time, and which he held in his like a treasure he would not willingly relinquish, though he was compelled to preserve an outward calmness.

"Come at least with me into yonder garden," he urged. "I cannot speak to you freely, and I dare not look at you while this woman is standing by."

The garden was a small square space, in-



closed on every side, with the high wall of a convent at the end throwing one-half of it into shadow ; a little green secluded spot, left to the wild luxuriance of growth under those warm skies. Without a word, Hester stepped out of the dark room into the glow of the evening sun, walking at his side with a measured step, and a grave set face, looking steadily forwards, without a glance up into his eyes.

"You hate me, Hester," he said. It was his first and chief thought when he saw how quickly her sunny grace had fled at the sight of him.

"No," she answered gently, but without raising her eyes to his as he had hoped ; "no, I could never hate you."

"Yet it is I who have brought all the sorrow into your life," he continued.

"Yes," she said.

"Then you must hate me," he persisted. "If I had never lived, if I had died years ago, your life would have been as smooth as the life of other girls."

"Yes," said Hester.

"Yet you loved me once," he went on. "Do you remember how you sat on a footstool at

my feet, holding my hand in yours, and slipping off my ring to try it on your own little fingers? It is this same ring, Hester."

He stretched out his hand to her, and she bent her eyes for a moment upon the diamonds flashing in the sunlight; but she looked away again steadily and sadly, her lips trembling, and a nervous quivering in her half-closed eyelids.

"Do you remember it?" he asked, thinking, not of the ring, but of the love she had borne for him.

"I remember it well," she murmured.

"My God! what a miserable fool I have been!" he cried, bitterly. "You loved me then, little Hetty."

"Yes," she said; "dearly."

"Dearly!" he echoed; "she loved me dearly; and it might have been, it might possibly have been, that she would have grown up loving me with her true, tender, faithful heart. Would that have been possible?"

"Yes," she answered, her voice faltering, and the tears standing in her steadfast eyes. Robert Waldron's passion, and the pain born of it, had been poignant enough before; but now

it had reached a point when all further pain is akin to rapture. His martyrdom was awakening within him a heroism which was stirring with sharp blissful pangs of life through his whole spirit. Hester fixed her searching yet tender gaze upon him, with no deepening colour on her cheeks, or look of shyness in her eyes.

"Yes," she said, softly, "I loved you dearly, and I can never hate you. I will not pretend to misunderstand you. You wish to know if that little child's love would have grown with my growth, had no barrier of your own raising come between us. I think it would. If there be any consolation or strength to you in the thought, I know that I should have loved you. Let that suffice for you. Be sure that I can never, never hate you."

Was it any consolation to him? It was a pain so exquisite at the moment, that he could not have answered the question to himself. They strolled together along the grassy walk of the garden, he wondering what words from his lips or hers would next stir the quiet air which seemed listening to them. The convent-bell rang for vespers, and a little babble



of women's voices in the convent-garden followed it.

"Hester," he said, dropping his voice to a whisper, "I will make myself worthy of the love that might have been. Give me but one token of that old, childish love of yours."

"What token can I give you?" she asked, her clear eyes meeting his, frankly.

"This ring," he answered, "which you have so often slipped on to your own finger, let me put it on your hand now, and wear it for the sake of what might have been. Nay, I do not wish to trouble or frighten you, my darling. Do not turn away from me."

"I am not afraid of you," she answered, giving him her hand, which he held in his own for a moment or two, as he tried the ring upon her fingers, wondering all the while if it could be true that he was shut in there, in the small, sunny, silent garden, with no one near to him but Hester, and yet that for his very life he dare not press to his lips the small hand on which he left his ring. Hester was looking at him, not at it.

"Now," he said, pushing back his disordered hair from his burning forehead, "let me tell

you all that I have to say to you. Sit down here beside me, for I have very much to say."

She sat down at his side on a bank of turf under one of the walls, and he told her all that had befallen him from the moment when Lawson's mother summoned him and Grant to the help of Rose. He spoke very mournfully of his little child.

"I am very sorry for you," sobbed Hester, laying her hand, upon which glistened his ring, on his arm.

"I must go home to-morrow," he said; "and you, Hester, when shall you come?"

"I don't know," she answered; "my father and I have talked about it these three days, but he cannot resolve to return to the old life. You see how changed he is? How could he go back to his gloomy work, which is no real work at all, but a dreary idleness? Yet we must go back some time."

"You wish to come home," he said.

"Oh, with all my heart!" cried Hester, clasping her hands with girlish earnestness.

"Hester," he said, "I am much older than you. You may speak to me as you would

“speak to my father, or yours. Do you love Carl Bramwell?”

“Yes,” she whispered, her face flushing into a deep crimson.

“God bless you both!” said Robert, after a moment’s pause. “You will be very happy. Yes, you must come home again, and it must be soon. Leave it to me, Hester. Do not be troubled by your father staying here a while longer.”


He loitered yet a few minutes, with Hester beside him, but neither of them said many words. Then she trode step by step with him down the soft grassy walk and through the house, standing at the door to look after him as he went his lonely way down the street. He turned to see her, and lifted his hat to her, with a forced smile which she was too far off to catch.

“It is very hard upon me!” he said to himself, with a groan.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### *GOOD NEWS FOR CARL.*

JOHN MORLEY had desired to be alone, that he might confront a thought which had been haunting him ever since he had learned that Rose was not dead. His mind was no longer warped and blinded. With the vigour which had returned to his frame, there had come a clearness of judgment to his reason. Yet the sudden news that Rose lived had probed the old wound to its depths. As long as he had believed her dead his pardon of her transgression against him had been simple. Now a serious complication came into it. She was alive, and dwelling in the home she had forsaken,—the home to which he must soon return. His duty to Hester required that he should not keep her in this exile, to which she resigned herself through devotion to him. That his daughter loved Carl was apparent to him, and he had but little doubt that Carl loved her. Even if Robert Waldron did not disclose the secret of their hiding-place, which need be kept as a



secret no longer, it was his duty to return to his own town, and appear again amongst his townsmen. But Rose was there ! And there too was the dreary life which had fallen from him suddenly as a burden loosened from his weary shoulders. Must he stoop to pick it up again ? Must he keep Rose in his house and upon his hearth ? He could not do that. He felt that though he might forgive her, though he did forgive her with all his heart ; though there was still in the depths of his nature a profound passion for his young wife who had been unfaithful to him ; he could never suffer her again to be to him what Hester's mother had been. There was an awful sadness in this. Rose dead had not been to him the terrible grief which Rose living would be. If he returned, he must look upon her fair face again, listen to her sweet voice, be shaken like a reed before her ; yet put her away inexorably, against all tears, all pleadings, all contrition. He could not ask Hester what he must do. How could his daughter understand this ? There was no alternative offered to him, except the selfish one of staying where he was in this pleasant retreat. But that would be unjust to Hester, whose



home-sickness was known to him. A sharp conflict, quickly ended, was fought in his spirit. When he returned to the house of the widow Limet, he told Hester that they would start for England in a few days.


During the three past days Hester and her father had had many confidential conversations. The mystery of the attack made upon Robert, and the similar one by which Rose had well-nigh perished, had been fully discussed between them. It had not been any mystery to Hester until now. She had been as fully convinced as Grant and Robert, that her father had been the stealthy assailant in the first instance; and there had been scarcely a doubt upon her mind that he had also attacked Rose in a paroxysm of madness and despair which had made him unconscious of his own deed. But now that he emphatically maintained his innocence, and narrated circumstantially the details of his finding of Rose already dead, as he supposed, she could not withhold her credence. By repeated and strenuous efforts of his memory, the recollection came back to him of having heard Lawson closing the side-door which gave him access to his work-rooms, and this he told to Hester. He

had not been alone in the house then. Lawson had been there ; and it must have been he who had been the secret and vindictive foe. No one knew as she did the profound hatred Rose had aroused in him, even before her marriage with his master. To no one else had he displayed it. There came back to her mind his wild, half-crazy denunciations of her ; his superstitious visions of her own mother's presence, which had ceased when Rose usurped her place in the household. The criminal could be no other than Lawson.

But Robert on his part was speeding away for England, with his conviction in no way shaken that it was John Morley's hand which had been lifted up against himself and Rose. His denial of the crime seemed perfectly natural, and almost justifiable, to him ; it had been quiet and brief, a mere parenthesis in a conversation. Besides, he was convinced he had no other enemy, not merely in Little Aston, but in all England itself. He still considered himself as having been placed more on a level with John Morley by this double attempt at revenge. He did not see any reason why, where there was so much mutually to for-

give, John Morley could not be fully reconciled to his penitent wife. They must leave Little Aston, of course; but London would afford them a residence, where their former life would be altogether unknown. It was in his father's power to procure a post as secretary or librarian for John Morley; and they could live somewhere near Carl and Hester, and be very happy after all. It seemed as if he were doomed to pay the heaviest penalty himself.

He reached Little Aston towards the close of the second day, having stopped nowhere on his journey. Grant's house was on his way to Aston Court, and he turned in to see his little Hester for a minute. It was a week since he had left her, and consumption takes rapid strides sometimes. He was afraid to inquire from the servant how the child was, but passed on quickly to the room where he had seen her last. It was empty. Even the cushions and pillows, which had been piled up on the sofa to make it softer for her feeble little frame, had been removed, as if she no longer occupied this place. His heart contracted with a terrible dread. The fatherly instinct, so strong in Mr. Waldron, had been quickly and strongly de-



veloped in himself. How dear the child had been to him, how firm and close a hold she had laid upon his affection, he had scarcely known till this moment. He turned sharply round, and demanded where Mrs. Grant was. She was up-stairs in the room which had formerly been Carl's study. Robert hastened there, and entered it abruptly.

Annie was not in the room, but Carl was there, looking pale and suffering, his eyes wearing an expression of a continual anxiety. He was standing at the window, which faced westward, watching the sun set, but not really seeing it; for his troubled thoughts were far away from any object his gaze rested upon. He turned as Robert entered, and came forward to greet him.

"Where is Hester," asked Robert, in a broken voice.

"Hester!" cried Carl. "How can I tell? Would to God I knew."

"But my little Hetty," said Robert; "you know where she is, Carl. She is not dead!"


"No," answered Carl, with a look of profound sympathy; "your little girl is not dead. She is living still; but we have taken

her to her mother. She pined to go to her, as soon as she knew she was in this neighbourhood ; and Rose entreated to have her. She is gone to die in John Morley's house."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Robert ; "then I cannot see her, I cannot nurse her again."

He felt that it would be utterly impossible for him to visit John Morley's house with Rose in it ; to watch with her the child's coming death. How could he bear to face Rose in the presence of their dying child ? No ; he had lost the little creature, so lately found, whose life had been cold and desolate through his sin. He felt a momentary anger that they should have stolen her away from him, during his absence ; but it died away as Carl spoke again.

"I thought of that," he said ; "but what else could we do ? The mother's claim is the strongest. She has been a living child for Rose these many years ; you have known her only a few months. Besides, Hetty pined and grieved about it. She would not have been living now if we had not yielded. You were gone, and we did not know when you might return."



It was done, and could not be undone, even if he had wished it. She was as surely separated from him, for the short period that still remained of her life, as if the grave had closed over her. Yet Carl had acted well; had done precisely what a true and tender nature dictated. He could not blame him. No reproof could fall upon any one except himself.

"Carl," he said, after a long silence, "I have found Hester."

"Hester?" he cried again, starting violently, and grasping Robert's arm. "What did you say? You have found Hester?"

"Yes, Hester and John Morley," he answered, almost reluctantly.

Carl could not articulate a syllable, but gazed with mingled incredulity and beseeching into Robert's face. He could not believe his own ears; yet there came a chilly recollection across him of Lawson's words, "I have a notion that Robert Waldron knows where she is." Now he said that he had found them! He had been absent for a week, and had seen Hester! Carl scarcely knew whether to seize him by the throat, or

cast himself upon his knees before him, to extort this precious knowledge from him. He knew where Hester was; she who as truly belonged to him as if he had secured her troth. For did she not belong to him? What right had this rich, prosperous man, the favourite of the world and of fortune, to come between him and her? Was not every principle of justice and fitness opposed to the possibility of his possessing Hester? Hardly a moment had passed since Robert had uttered his reluctant tidings, and these thoughts had only flashed through Carl's brain, when he spoke again more freely and heartily.

"I discovered where they were from a hint dropped by Lawson's mother, who knew nothing herself of their place of concealment. They fled to her native place, a little town in Burgundy. I went there to make sure that my guess was correct; and found myself right. Of course they had never heard any news from England, and heaven knows how long they might have hidden there, for John Morley had no idea but that Rose was dead. He denies the crime, and he denies ever striking me; but then why did he flee? He is not quite

sane yet. He is unwilling to return to England, though Hester suffers from her long trouble. She is home-sick ; you can see it plainly ; and she is longing to come back."

"I must go to them," interrupted Carl, taking a stride towards the door, as if he would set off the same instant.

"I knew you would," said Robert, in an accent of relief and regret. "Yes ; go. You will prevail with him, and take care of her. But stay ; I must give you fuller directions as to how you are to find them ; and you cannot leave here before the first train in the morning. What a happy fellow you are !"


He uttered the last words with a smile, sadder than many tears are. Carl was arrested and quieted by it. He descended from the height of his own unexpected joy to enter into the desolation and loneliness of Robert Waldron. They talked together until long after the sun had gone down ; and then parted with a friendship begun between them which would last their life-time.



## CHAPTER XVII.

### *TO BURGUNDY.*

WITH Robert's very minute directions, and with the certainty of finding Hester at the end of his journey, Carl felt no sort of hesitation or embarrassment at the idea of passing through a country, the language of which was altogether unfamiliar to him. He knew two or three dead languages, but he had no practical knowledge of French, and could not comprehend a word addressed to him by any of his fellow-passengers, or the railway officials; but as far as Paris his ignorance did not prove inconvenient. He crossed the Channel and sped up to Paris as swiftly as steamers and railways could take him; but it appeared the slowest mode of transit it had ever been his lot to experience. An interpreter accompanied the train, and expedited his passage through Paris to the Lyons Railway Station, from which was the line running through Burgundy. He knew how long it would be before he could reach the small station, which Robert had



described to him, and where he would find a diligence plainly inscribed with the word "Ecquemonville." He would have nothing to do but seat himself in it, put six francs into the hand of the driver; and there would be no longer any difficulty to surmount in fulfilling his mission. After that Hester would be his interpreter. But if there had been a thousand difficulties, multiplied by a thousand dangers, he was ready to confront them all to find her at the end of them.

The country through which he was passing received but small attention from him; though now and then he started, as if aroused from a slight slumber, to give a brief glance at the long valleys, and broad table-lands he was traversing. He promised himself to survey them more carefully on his return, when Hester and her father were with him. One question agitated him very greatly. Was it true that John Morley was innocent of any attempt to avenge himself either upon Rose or Robert Waldron? So far as his liability to earthly judgment and punishment was concerned, he ran no risk of being called upon to expiate his crime. Circumstances had

singularly favoured the criminal. But Carl longed to believe that the hand of Hester's father was free from every stain. His mind was tossed from one thought to another in a tumult of hope and apprehension, until he found that the train began to slacken speed at the time when they should be approaching the station where he was to alight.

The train had been shunted into a siding to wait until another, bound for Paris, had started from the little station. It was passing them slowly, and his glance, now on the alert, fell upon the last compartment of a second-class carriage, as it glided by. There sat—he could not by any chance be mistaken—John Morley, but erect, vigorous, and sun-burnt, with an unwonted energy in his face, and beside him was Hester, whose full face he could not see as it was turned towards her father, but whose delicate profile was too familiar to him ever to be forgotten. An instant only did this vision of her last, for the train was getting up its speed, and almost as he saw her she was lost to his sight again.

Carl's first impulse was to thrust himself half-out of the window, and to shout after the

receding train ; but he restrained himself, and waited until his carriage-door was unlocked. Without doubt this was the station he had booked for ; the ticket was taken from him, and he alighted mechanically. He stood motionless, gazing down the long straight line of railway, narrowing to a vanishing point at a great distance off, along which he could yet see the film of smoke fading away into the blue air. A few other travellers had descended from the train, but they did not disperse hastily as in England. They lingered instead, staring hard at this handsome young foreigner, who stood immovable in an attitude of dismay. When Carl awoke to his ludicrous position, he found himself surrounded by a group of country-people, whose eyes and mouths were wide open, and seemed little likely to close again.

He lifted his hat from his beating temples, to let the cool air play about them ; and the Frenchmen, not to be out-done in politeness, removed theirs, standing round him bare-headed in the glowing sunshine. Carl was half-beside himself with disappointment and embarrassment.

"Is there nobody here that can speak English?" he exclaimed, pathetically. This was an utterly unforeseen crisis, full of difficulty and anxiety; at the moment he would have exchanged all his scholarly knowledge of dead languages for as good an acquaintance with colloquial French. Where was the train that had just disappeared bound for? Was it going to Paris, or was John Morley carrying away Hester to some still more obscure hiding-place than Ecquemonville? This last was possible, if he was not quite sane, and was unwilling to return to Little Aston. Or perhaps they intended to go back to Ecquemonville. The driver of the diligence very probably knew that, and where they had taken tickets for; but how could he communicate with him? He was too deeply absorbed in these reflections to care very greatly for the unblinking eyelids and unabashed stare of the breathless spectators about him, each one of whom seemed afraid he should miss some eccentricity of the Englishman's behaviour.

"*How doyedó?*" said a voice at Carl's side, dwelling long upon the first word and running the other three into one. He turned quickly

round and saw a bright but sallow face, with black hair drawn tight from it, and confined by a pretty little white cap. The eyes meeting his were dark, and smiled with a somewhat anxious expression, as the speaker awaited the effect of her salutation.

"Thank heaven you can speak English!" exclaimed Carl, fervently, taking the little woman's hand eagerly into his, and looking down upon her with a flush of gladness upon his embarrassed face.

"*How* doyedo?" she inquired again, with greater confidence.

"Oh, quite well, thank you!" said Carl, rapidly. "I want to know where yonder train is going to?"

He pointed down the line, where the last streak of smoke was quickly vanishing, and she followed the direction of his finger with her bright eyes, but there was an expression of uneasiness in them.

"I you no comprehends no," she said, shaking her head anxiously; "*how* doyedo?"

"I want to know," persisted Carl, "if that train is going to Paris?"

He pronounced the word Paris well enough

for her to understand it, and she caught at it quickly. But he had come direct from there, and could not wish to return, she thought.

He continued pointing down the line, and repeating his question, "Is it going to Paris?"

"No, no," she answered, shaking her head emphatically, and afterwards waving her hand comprehensively about the surrounding country, "*non, non ; pas à Paris.*"

The audience were enjoying this unintelligible interview with great zest ; but Carl's hope had perished altogether. Hester was lost to him at the very time he had expected to find her. He sighed a heavy sigh of vexation and perplexity ; but he could not help smiling at the solicitude of the little Frenchwoman, who looked into his face with an air of disappointment.

"*How doyedo ?*" she repeated, with a desire to afford him a forlorn comfort by her knowledge of his language.

He answered only by another troubled smile, and broke through the circle surrounding him. There was a time-table near the window of the ticket office, and by dint of profound and repeated study Carl made sure that there was

---

no train to Paris stopping at the little station until the same hour the next day. He pointed it out to his new friend, and made her understand that he must return to Paris by that train. In the meantime she took him into her charge, and conducted him to an hotel, where he was entertained with the utmost hospitality and curiosity. But he was too fully occupied with anxious thoughts concerning John Morley and Hester to be conscious either of kindness or inquisitiveness. His anxiety grew almost intolerable before the moment came when he seated himself in the train which was to convey him back to Paris.



## CHAPTER XVIII.

### *AT HOME AGAIN.*

FOUR days after Robert Waldron returned to Little Aston, John Morley and Hester were on their way thither. They were going home gladly ; yet with a solemn gladness, for a dark shadow fell across the future. The thought of Rose was upon both their hearts. How would they meet her ? In what relationship could she stand to them in the future ? Even Hester felt the terrible weight and difficulty of this question. She clung more closely to her father in this time of conflict, and scarcely gave Carl a thought as they were passing through London. He left all the arrangements of their journey to her ; and she, with the intolerance of suspense natural to her years, would not stop for rest on the way. But both of them shrank from the idea of being recognised at Little Aston station ; so they left the train about two miles from it, at a village where neither of them was known.

It was a soft, dark, soundless night of autumn, with no breeze abroad to rustle the

dying leaves. The air was heavy and scented, with a languor in it which oppressed the spirits, and caused Hester to sigh often, with a painful and unconquerable depression. All the silence and utter stillness, the muteness of the quiet hedgerows, where the birds uttered no sleepy chirp as they do in spring and summer when a footfall disturbs them in their nests, the hush of the dark funereal trees which made no stir or murmur overhead ; all this silence seemed ominous. She wanted a little whisper of welcome and encouragement. If her father had been indeed a murderer, skulking under the black shadows of the trees for concealment, there could not have been a more condemning hush and dumbness of all nature as he passed by. The sky above them was shrouded by one unbroken cloud, through which neither moon nor star looked down upon them. For a hundred yards or so a little way-side brook gurgled along their path with a pleasant and soothing babble, but it also soon forsook them, and turned aside into the meadows, leaving the road more cheerless by its desertion.

John Morley was silent too ; but if she could

have seen his face she would have been alarmed at the strong passions which furrowed it. This was the walk he had most often taken with Rose; in those early days when he was lavishing a wealth of love upon her, and when he believed himself beloved again, because her treacherous blue eyes had been bent upon him, dewy with a feigned and false tenderness. Every step was bringing him nearer his home, and nearer her presence in his house. Even now he could have turned and fled again; fled back to that pleasant and sunny valley in Burgundy, where no man knew his dishonour. But Hester was by his side, though he was but half conscious of her nearness, and had but a vague sense of his complete wretchedness without her. It was when they came in sight of the town-lamps, and their own street lay before them, that he arrested his steady step for an instant, and lifting her hand reverently to his lips, murmured "God bless you, my daughter."

The chapel stood at their left hand, and Hester drew her father into the shadow of its great portico, where she had found Rose homeless and friendless. They stood behind

the pillars, hand pressed in hand, pausing for a little while before making the last stage of their journey. Opposite to them, in the garret where Lawson and his mother lived, there twinkled the faint glimmer of a candle in the uncurtained window, which was too high to be overlooked.

"Father," whispered Hester, pressing his hand more warmly; "let me go and get Lawson's key, and then we can enter our home without going in at the house door. You can turn into your own room, while I see where she is. It is late, and she may be already asleep; or she may be gone back to the old nursery. You need not see her to-night. Take some rest first; and you will feel better."

John Morley answered only by releasing her hand, and she left him in the chapel portico. Very quickly but softly she mounted the familiar staircase, and pushed open the door of the garret. Lawson was alone, leaning back in a large old chair, and looking very ill and worn. His dark eyes burned under his grey eyebrows, and his hollow cheeks were of an ashy paleness; his hair

was greyer and his eyes redder and more sunken than when she had seen him last. She had advanced half-way across the room before he perceived her entrance.

"Miss Hester!" he cried, in a tone of terror.

"Yes; it is Hester, dear old Lawson," she said; "Hester come back; and her father. He is waiting outside for me. I am come here for your key, so that we may get in home without letting anybody know."

"She is there," he answered, in a hoarse and hollow voice.

"We know it," said Hester; "I think I know all about it, Lawson. There is nobody in the world who knows it all as I do. You used to love me very dearly, and my mother too. But oh, how could you be so cruel, so wicked! See what sorrow it brought upon me! I think I should almost have died of home-sickness, if we had not known soon that we could come home safely."

She uttered her reproaches in a tender yet penetrating tone; and Lawson laid his palsied head upon the table before him, groaning bitterly. He made no attempt to answer her; but when he lifted his face for an instant to

look at her, she was shocked at its expression of suffering and despair.

"Are you ill, dear old Lawson?" she asked.

"I have my medicine here," he answered, tapping a small box which lay close to his hand.

"I cannot stay now;" she said, "my father is waiting for me. I see the key is hanging up in its old place. Good-bye, Lawson. Come down and see me alone in the morning; alone, you know."

She lingered for a minute to see if he would look up, or speak to her once more, but he did not; and she hurried away and out in the street again to her father.

They walked down the quiet street side by side, and in silence, for their hearts were too full for speech now. Their tread was hushed and measured, as though they formed part of a funeral procession. On either hand the tall houses were dark and full of gloomy shadows, which moved fitfully as they passed by in the flickering light of the few and feeble lamps. The strip of sky overhead was breaking into a multitude of small clouds, and the moon,

which was on the wane, looked down with a pale and hurried gleam through the rifts before the clouds closed speedily again over its mournful face. Their steps, slow before, slackened as they drew nearer to their old home, and stopped altogether as they stood opposite to it, looking up to its dark gables traced against the obscure sky. Of all who had ever gazed at the decayed and dingy dwelling, none had ever looked with such eyes as theirs. A shiver passed through them both, as if some deadly miasma had breathed upon them from the deserted and dishonoured house. Yet it was their home, the only home Hester had ever known; the home to which John Morley had brought her mother, and that second wife of his who had disgraced it by her sin. They stood opposite to it, two dark shadows in the gloom, scarcely daring to venture across the narrow street and invade the solemn solitude, if solitude indeed were there, of the empty house.

"Come," said Hester at last, grasping her father's hand again, and leading him like a child across the street. The door by which Lawson entered his workroom was gained by

an outer staircase, like that leading to the nursery, and it brought them on to the second floor of the building. Hester unlocked it and threw it open, a damp, cold, earthy air greeting them. The darkness was unbroken blackness within; but there was no danger that they should stumble upon the floor their feet had trodden so often. Yet John Morley stood within the closed door, rooted and immoveable, while Hester found Lawson's match-box and kindled a light. She came back to him and looked into his face. It had quite lost its newborn air of resolve and strength; and he stood with his head drooping once more, and his shoulders bowed, an old and decrepit man. She put both her arms fondly about his neck, and forced him to look at her.

"Have we done wrong in returning here?" she asked. "Do you feel sorry we came back?"

"No, no," he answered; "we have done well. It is but a passing paroxysm, a dread which is almost over. In a minute or two I shall be myself again. I will go to my own room, Hester."

He put his arm through hers, and leaned heavily upon it as she led him across the empty



workrooms. They found the door into the house unfastened, though a bolt was upon it which had never been there in their time. It opened at one end of the long, dark passage which ran in a straight line through the middle of the house. At the other end was the door of Rose's drawing-room, standing wide open, and sending a broad, bright stream of light into the darkness. Almost involuntarily Hester extinguished her candle, and drew her father's arm more closely through her own, thinking to gain his room unseen. But John Morley did not stir, and she could catch, in the glimmer which reached them, the flashing of his eyes as he gazed steadily into the lighted room. There was the sound of a footfall passing to and fro on the carpeted floor, but no one came into sight; and after a minute or two John Morley whispered into his daughter's ear.

"I must see her," he said; "let us go forward softly. Even if she discovers me here, I must see her this night."

With stealthy footsteps, as if they had no right to be in their own home, they crept along the passage until they could command the view of half the room within. It was many years

since Hester had looked into it, and she had grown from childhood to womanhood since; but to her eye there was but little change. Yet at one corner stood a little bed—she recollected it as her own—but it was not occupied. The child who had been sleeping in it was now being carried to and fro about the room, in the arms of her father, Robert Waldron.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### *THE LAST MOMENT.*

WHEN Carl told him that little Hester was gone to her mother, Robert believed that his child was lost to him altogether. He could not meet Rose in her husband's house; he could not even visit his child there. Mr. Waldron went every day to spend an hour or two with the little grand-daughter, whom he could not acknowledge, but who fastened the more closely about his heart. He spoke very gently to Rose, and with a reverence he had not accorded to her in the days when she had been a favourite with him, in spite of her girlish frivolity. The consecration of a great sin, purified by a great sorrow, was upon her. Now and then he addressed to her the few hearty words of fellowship and encouragement by which a true man, who is also a Christian, can bind up the broken in spirit; but they did not converse much. The thoughts of both were centred upon the child whose life was swiftly running

to its close. From the moment that she entered under John Morley's roof, they saw that her days were numbered; and on the morning of this day, when John Morley and Hester were hastening homewards, Grant counted the duration of her life by hours.

It was then that little Hester, growing conscious of a change in herself, began to think of all those who had made the last few months a holiday to her. Carl was gone away, and she should see him no more; but Annie could come to bid her farewell, and Robert Waldron, who had never been to see her since she had come to be with her mother. She asked Mr. Waldron himself, as he stooped over her bed, the tears in his eyes, and a strange pressure upon his throat.

"Why doesn't he come?" she said. "He used to be very kind to me. If you'd only tell him little Hester is going to die very, very soon, I'm sure he'd come. I loved him very much; almost as much as Carl."


"He shall come to see you, my little child," said Mr. Waldron.

So Robert came at last; back to the pleasant room, where pleasant and guilty hours had

passed quickly for him and Rose—hours which had sown deadly seeds broadcast. He could not fly from it now ; he could not make haste to leave it behind him. Hester—his child—was dying, and he was not coward enough to desert her death-bed. Rose was there, but he scarcely saw her, scarcely spoke to her. They met for the last time in the presence of their child, but they met as strangers ; only one short, quick glance into one another's eyes told their tale of agony and repentance.

“Don't leave me again,” moaned little Hester ; “I shall die soon ; and, oh, I am very tired. Could you carry me about in your arms for a little while ?”

This had been her cry from time to time during the day ; and Robert, cradling her tenderly in his arms, had paced about the room, gathering up all the scattered memories which lay in ambush for him behind every familiar object upon which his eye rested. How he loathed himself ! How he wondered at his own idiotic sin ! With what sharp unutterable pangs every word and moan of the dying child pierced him to the heart ! The martyrdom was keener to him than to Rose, whose feeblepess softened



the anguish of her soul. She was going to follow very quickly ; but he would live for many years, with the image of a white face, and small, emaciated limbs, and the echo of a little feeble voice, dwelling for ever in the depths of his memory.

It was upon this agony and passion of retribution that John Morley looked, himself unseen, and reading the whole story with his keen and quickened eyesight. There was Robert Waldron, his head bowed down over the form of his dying child, and his heavy feet treading to and fro under his burden ; as his own had done in the room below, with a burden as heavy bending down his head. Rose had fallen asleep for sorrow, and was unconscious of the nearness of both of them. She was lying upon the sofa, with a shawl thrown over her ; but her head was uncovered, and the light fell upon it. He could see every line traced upon her corpse-like face. If one element of repentance consists in not thinking over again the sins of the pleasant past, it was long since Rose had ceased to dwell upon them. Her husband's heart yearned to her with a great pity, with a passionate

tenderness which no other woman had ever stirred within him. She slept, and he would not have her awake. If she had been dead he would not have wished her alive again. But he had never loved her, never grieved for her, as he did now.

It might have been that the bitter sigh which was in his heart rose unbidden to his lips, or that he or Hester made some movement of which they were unaware, for Robert paused suddenly in his dreary march, and turned towards them, peering anxiously into the darkness. The child, too, lifted her feeble head and bent it forward. Hester could restrain herself no longer. With a swift and noiseless step, and with her finger raised in a gesture of silence, she glided into the room, leaving her father still standing without, and took the little child out of Robert's arms. Little Hester nestled down upon her lap, breathing a sigh of measureless content, and gazing up into the sweet face bent over her with a flitting smile upon her own. Robert Waldron knelt down before them both, and felt that the supreme moment of his martyrdom had come.

"Dear Hester," murmured the child, "you are just in time. I've been here having my holidays before I die. But I'm going to die now, very quickly. Did you know, and are you come on purpose?"

"I did not know you were here, my darling," answered Hester. "This is my own home."

"Yes, I know," she said, plaintively; "my mother told me you used to live here when you were as old as me. Was it then you knew my father?"

Hester's pitiful gaze was bent upon Robert, but he could not bear to meet it. He covered his eyes, and bowed his head until it almost rested upon her feet.

"Yes; it was then that I knew him," she answered, very softly.

"I shall know him soon," said little Hester, in a tone of exultation; "very, very soon. I am going to heaven, and I shall see God there; and Jesus Christ, who loves little children so. But He won't be jealous if I love my father very, very much; because I've never known him here, and couldn't love him. You don't think God will be angry, or Jesus Christ, do you, Hester?"



"No, no," she answered, the tears falling fast upon the child's thin hand.

"Hester! Hester!" cried Robert in an accent of profound anguish.

"Which does he mean?" she asked, touching his bowed head playfully. "There are two of us now. Is it me, or the other Hester, you are calling to? I don't know what we should do if I was going to live. But I'm very glad, after all, to be going to my own father."

She lay still for a few minutes, as if exhausted, looking up to Hester with a gaze of utter satisfaction. Grant, whom Hester had not seen until then, came forward and shook his head gravely as he felt the failing pulse in the languid little wrist, which he put down gently after he had held it for a few seconds. She turned her eyes away from Hester's face for a moment to look at him.

"You've all been very good to me," she murmured. "You've given me such holidays as I never thought of; but it is too late now; and I'm not sorry. I don't want anybody to be very sorry. Shall you be very sorry?" she added, touching Robert's head again with her cold little hand.

His heart was dead within him, and he neither spoke nor lifted up his face, though she waited for an answer. Rose was awake now, and was creeping towards them, holding by the chairs to steady her failing and faltering steps; while John Morley looked on, seeing all, hearing every word of the child's dying voice, and comprehending every turn of the brief history which was ending thus.

"I don't know what to call you," said the child. "They have all names but you; and I love you very much. I think I love you as much as Carl. If my father had not died, perhaps he would have carried me about like you've done, in your arms. Are you so tired that you cannot look at me?"

"He is not tired," said Hester; "he is too sorry to look at you."

"I don't want him to be so very sorry," she moaned, her lips quivering with grief; "nor anybody else, nor my mother. Tell him not to be like that, Hester. Tell him to look at us. I want to see his face again, because I love him."

"Robert," said Hester, "look at her."

Her voice was almost lost in sobs, and she

laid her hand, as the child had done, upon his bowed head. He lifted it up then, and glanced first at her, then at his little daughter, with a look of anguish, such as she had never seen even upon her father's face.

"Why," faltered the child, in broken sentences, "do you think I love Carl the most now? I only loved him most because I knew him first. See, I love you quite as much. Kiss me, and let us be friends before I die. I wish I'd known you all my life, because then I might have loved you most of all. But it wouldn't be right now, would it?"

She had put her hand to his face, and was stroking it fondly; and Robert seized it, and held it passionately to his lips.

"You love me very much," she whispered, "very much. I wonder if my father would have loved me any more! But I shall soon know. Why, there's my mother leaning over our chair, Hester."

Hester had felt Rose beside her for the last minute, but she had not dared to stir for fear of disturbing the easy position of the dying child. Rose spoke in a shrill yet feeble voice, which smote upon John Morley's ear.

"I must tell her," she cried. "Robert! Hester! I must tell her."

"No, no! not now! never, now!" answered Robert.

"Would you like to see your father before you die?" asked Hester, bending more fondly over the little girl.

"I cannot," she said, with a bright glance; "he is waiting for me up in heaven. And my mother says she won't be very long. Let everybody kiss me quickly, for I am going."

She almost raised herself up on Hester's lap, and looked eagerly about her. Grant was standing before her, but she looked past him to the open doorway and the obscure passage beyond, where John Morley's white head stood out clearly in the gloom. She raised her hand slowly, pointing towards him; and Rose, turning her eyes in that direction, saw the face of her husband looking towards her in this hour of his vengeance.

"Let him come first, and kiss me," said the child, in her dying voice.


John Morley advanced steadily into the room, with every eye fixed upon him intently; Robert alone knowing nothing of what little

Hester's words meant, for he had again bowed his head down almost to the ground at Hester's feet. Rose watched her husband; and Hester's imploring gaze never left his face. If there were any bitterness and rancour in his heart now, it would be there for ever. No punishment, no remorse could satisfy him if he was not satisfied at this moment. He did not look at Rose, but his eyes were fastened upon the small, wan face resting upon Hester's arm. The little face smiled up at him, and the little hands were stretched out to him.

"You would love me too, if you only knew me," she said. "Kiss me once before I die."

He stood between his wife and Robert Waldron now; he could have laid a hand upon each of them. But he looked only at the child, his eyes fast growing dim, and with an unspeakable compassion in his heart. Resting his hand upon Hester's shoulder, and stooping over Rose's dying child, he laid a long, gentle kiss upon her lips; a kiss which meant more than any words could have said.

"My father will kiss me like that," murmured the failing voice; and Robert raised himself up to look at her once more. The




last moment was come. The last kiss her chilling lips could feel had been imprinted there by Rose's husband. He groped about with his hands for an instant, as if to catch at some solid support, and then he fell forward fainting at John Morley's feet.

For an instant no one stirred. John Morley leaned heavily upon Hester's shoulder; but when Grant bent over the senseless form, he pushed him gently on one side, and stooping down he raised Robert in his arms, with a woman's tenderness of touch, and carried him into his own room and laid him upon his own bed.

## CHAPTER XX.

### *A FULL FORGIVENESS.*

GRANT removed the dead child from Hester's lap, and bade her take Rose down stairs to her father's sitting-room. Rose shed no tears, but appeared calm and almost apathetic. Hester, carrying a light in her trembling hand, led the way to the gloomy room, where John Morley's life had been wasted. There was a chilly sense of vacancy about it then, for all the every-day confusion had been carefully put into frigid order by Lawson's mother. Hester set Rose down in the old chair on the hearth, and busied herself for some time in lighting the fire; while she sat by, watching her movements with dull but tearless eyes. The rare, refined beauty of Hester's face, pale with suppressed emotions, had never shown itself as it did now. When the fire had burned up, she brought a footstool to the side of Rose, and sitting down, weariedly laid her head upon her lap. The fond, daughter-like attitude, the sweetness of Hester's wan



face, the utter oblivion of her step-mother's sin, expressed by her silence, roused Rose from her stupefaction. She laid both her hands upon Hester's head, and hiding her face upon them burst into a passion of tears.

"Why are you so good to me?" she cried. "Why was I ever born? You would have been happier if you had never seen me, little Hetty. Oh, little Hetty! little Hetty! why did I ever come into this house to be a sorrow to you? Oh, I did not think it would all end in this. And yet you love me through it all!"

"Yes; I love you dearly, poor mother," said Hester, in her softest accents.

"Then you think God will love me in spite of all," murmured Rose.

"I am sure He does," she answered.

"And my husband?" she continued, in a voice of mingled entreaty and incredulity.

"Yes; my father loves you," said Hester; "he forgives you. He has come back knowing you were here. He is taking care of Robert Waldron now. Hush! they are coming down stairs."

They listened breathlessly to the sound of footsteps descending the staircase. Would



they come in here, both John Morley and Robert Waldron, and meet Rose face to face? She pressed her hand against her heart, praying silently to God to spare her this trial. The door was open, and they could hear distinctly all that was passing in the old-fashioned entrance-hall. Grant had come down with them, and said he would walk home with Robert. Then Robert spoke, in a troubled, scarcely articulate voice.

"John Morley," he said, "I have sinned grievously against you, and I can do nothing to atone for it to you. Yet I have suffered for my sin, and repented of it with a very bitter repentance. Can you pardon me?"

"As freely as God pardons us all," answered John Morley, in a clear tone. "Yet it may be you will have to bear the consequences of your sin all your life long. But if at any time I can help you to bear that burden, by counsel, by sympathy, by prayer, come to me and let us talk together as friend with friend. You are young yet; young enough to do good work in the world. God bless you and give you peace!"

There was a minute's silence in the outer

room, and then the house-door closed upon Grant and Robert; and John Morley's foot took a step or two towards his own forsaken parlour. Hester looked up into Rose's face, and saw it flushed and kindled with a new light. He, who had forgiven Robert freely and with a blessing, was coming towards her, his wife, whom he had loved with a profound passion. Neither of them moved, except that Rose leaned back in the chair, with a strange flutter of hope and joy making her tremble. He came on, entered the room, and stood just within the threshold, looking sadly towards them, as they sat together in the red fire-light, upon his dishonoured hearth.

"Father!" cried Hester, rising from her footstool, and going towards him as he remained motionless at the door.

"Do not go," he said, laying his hand upon her arm; "do not leave us. You have ministered between us this long time past. Stay with us still."

"But speak to her," urged Hester; "tell her that you forgive her too, freely."

She drew him on towards the hearth, her arm pressed about him with a tender force,

until he stood opposite to Rose, and looked down upon her fair face, which in the red light had borrowed some of the bloom of her girlhood. Her blue eyes, glistening with unshed tears, were raised to him in speechless entreaty; and he met their gaze with an unspeakable pity in his own.

"Child," he said, in a voice of trouble, mingled with compassion, "I have just seen you pass through a woman's keenest sorrow."

"No, no," sobbed Rose, "no, no! That was not my keenest sorrow. I shall soon go to her. I am going to die."

"Yes," he said, still looking down upon her with a strange tenderness.

"Oh!" she cried, with a pitiful wail in her feeble voice; "if I could only do something to atone for it, to make you believe that I love you! I was such a silly weak creature; I did not know then how much better your love was than his. You did love me before I was so wicked, didn't you?"

"Love you!" he echoed.

"Yes, I know it," she continued, wringing her hands. "I knew it as soon as I had forsaken you. Don't think I was ever happy.

He was kind, but every word he spoke was a reproach to me. I had a little child, but she scarcely belonged to me; I could not let her live with me; I never nursed her; we never played together, like little Hetty and I used to play together, just after you married me. Do you remember? Oh, that was so happy! I feel as if I had been in heaven once, and fallen down, down, down into a pit of darkness. Shall we know each other in heaven do you think?"

"I think we shall," he answered.

"Is it better for me to die than to live?" she asked imploringly.

"God thinks it best," he said.

"If I had lived," she went on, "could you so have forgiven me that you could take me back again, quite back again to you, as your wife, whom you loved and trusted, as in the time before I deceived you. I don't think anybody could love you as I would. Oh, how I would wait and watch to please you! Could you have forgiven me so?"

"No," said John Morley, his whole heart yearning towards her, yet knowing that it was her doom so plainly read upon her face, which

made it possible for him to keep her under his roof during the short span still remaining to her of life. The complication which he had dreaded when he heard that Rose was living was already disentangled. He would not be compelled to put her from him, against the softening of his own love and the urgent pleas of her penitence. He could see that a few weeks, or months it might be, remained, during which she could still be with him, and he could look upon her and listen to her beloved voice, without any wrong done to his own conscience and his sense of righteousness. It was a great boon from the God he had distrusted.

"Child," he said—and from that time he called her by no other name—"I love you wondrously, and therefore I thank God that He is going to call you home to Himself. I could not have taken you back living to my inmost heart, and to the wifehood which was your right once. But, dying, I can shelter you here, within my own house, upon my own hearth, where Hester's mother died many years ago. And in my very heart of hearts I can cherish the memory of you, coming home at last, weary of your long exile and sin, comforted by my

tenderness, and passing away under my protection. Give thanks, my poor child, that your probation upon earth is nearly ended."

Rose had lifted herself painfully and feebly from her chair, and stood opposite to him, listening with parted lips and beseeching eyes to his words, uttered in a voice of passionate affection. She could not altogether understand him yet, any more than she had done in those far-off times when he had seemed very high above her girlish comprehension. But she knew that he loved her and had forgiven her; he would not banish her again from the home from which she had fled, being easily tempted. As a child whose intelligence cannot grasp all the meaning of its own fault and the pardon given to it hides its childish tears in the bosom of its mother, Rose stretched out her arms to her husband. He hesitated for a moment, a hesitation which she did not see, and then drew her towards him, and laid her head upon his breast.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### *CARL'S HOUR.*

CARL was exactly twenty-four hours behind John Morley and Hester, on their rapid journey homewards. At Paris he learned, through an interpreter, that two such travellers had passed through the day before, and had gone on direct for England. The station-master at Little Aston informed him mysteriously that there was a rumour in the town of Mr. Morley and his daughter having taken possession of their house again, and that there was certainly a lady with them, whom people believed to be no other than Mrs. Morley herself. Carl's anxiety fell from him in a moment. Hester was safe and at home again! He could not give a thought either to Rose or her husband. Leaving his portmanteau upon the platform as a thing unworthy of his recollection, he rushed with precipitate headlong haste to John Morley's house, haggard, dusty, and travel-stained, with eyes dull for want of sleep, and tangled hair falling in disorder about his careworn face. There

was no difficulty in gaining admission; the house-door could be opened from the outside by simply turning the handle. He could not stay to knock. He paused no longer at the closed door of John Morley's parlour, but flung it open and strode in, with all the irresistible impatience which had been kept in check so long.

It had not been an idle day for Hester. There was no servant in the house, and though Lawson's mother did her best, and had been closely at work since the morning, many things had fallen to Hester's lot to do. Upstairs in Rose's drawing-room, sunny and pleasant, lay the dead form of the lonely little child, whose holidays had come too late to save her; and Hester's gentle hands had given to the room an air of soft tender repose, well suited to the peacefulness of little Hester's slumbers. Mr. Waldron and Robert had been in during the day to look at her for the last time; for to-morrow she was to be buried in a quiet church-yard a mile or two away from Little Aston, with John Morley and Grant alone to follow her to the grave. In the dark parlour below, Rose had rested in the great chair upon her husband's



hearth, waited upon by him with a marvellous carefulness and foresight. A singular and solemn satisfaction seemed to pervade the house.

It was night again now ; almost the hour when Hester and her father had stolen in home the evening before. Rose was in bed, and had fallen asleep calmly. John Morley was gone to his own chamber ; and Hester was alone in the parlour, watching the fire die out in the grate, and the light grow fainter about the crevices and corners of the walls. Robert had told her that Carl was gone to Burgundy in quest of her ; and she was taking time now to follow him in his journey with somewhat troubled thoughts. What would he do there, in that remote little town, where nobody knew a word of English ? How could he find out what had become of them ? Would it come into his mind to think that the *curé* might understand Latin, and could communicate with him in that language ? Or would he wander about disconsolate and perplexed, seeking traces of her, and being unable to discover them ? Of course it could not be for long ; but she felt very much disturbed for him. How greatly he

would be grieved that the little child had died while he was absent !

Hester's thoughts had reached this point when Carl made his abrupt entrance. He did not know what or whom he had expected to find beyond the closed door of John Morley's parlour. But he was not at all prepared to come upon Hester sitting all alone in the dim firelight, surrounded by the hush and stillness of a house which he had almost expected to find full of stir and tumult. It was several months since he had seen her, and the thought of her had grown almost a mocking and haunting fancy. Until very recently he had lived on in the belief that she was dwelling in some hiding-place very near to him, and that he might chance to cross her path any hour of any day. For the last few days he had been in eager pursuit of her, and had lost her like a shadow. Now she sat in the dusky light, looking into the embers, but starting to her feet the instant that he strode into the room, and seeming ready to take flight again. He forgot that no word of love had ever crossed his lips to meet Hester's ear. She belonged to him by right of his great love and his great anxiety.

He clasped her passionately in his arms, and laying his head down upon hers, was speechless in the presence of his great joy.

"Carl," said Hester, lifting her hand to his face with one of the sweetest caresses a girl can give, "I am safe; I am come back. My father and I are at home again."

She made no effort to withdraw herself from his encircling arms, or to affect a maidenly reserve. Presently Carl released her himself, only keeping her hand in his, as they stood side by side on the hearth, and he looked down upon her eagerly and with restrained delight. The smouldering fire shot up a friendly little blaze, whose light played about her delicate face, now tinged with a soft flush. She trembled a little; her fingers quivered in his clasp; the breath came fluttering through her parted lips. He could not break the delicious silence which had fallen upon them. Any words of his would be poor indeed compared to it.

"Carl," faltered Hester, in a tremulous voice, "little Hester is dead!"

He understood what she told him; he even felt a passing pain at hearing that the child had died so soon; but it only gave another touch

like the unison note in music, to his perfect happiness. The tears shone upon Hester's long eyelashes; and he bent down and kissed them away.

"You know I love you," he said, in a tone half of apology and half of appropriation.

"Yes, I know," whispered Hester, her eyelids closed as he had left them, when his lips had been laid against them.

"And you love me?" he said.

"Yes, I love you," she whispered again.

"Hester," he said, with a man's quick jealousy, "look me in the face, and tell me that you never loved anybody but me."

"How could I?" she asked, raising her eyelids but a little, and keeping her eyes upon the ground. "You know how few people I have ever seen. You, and Grant, and—"

"Robert Waldron," he added, as she paused. "Yes; I understand; I know. I had no chance against a man like him. But then why did you not accept him, Hester? Only a few people, like your father, and me, and those who believe that there are many better and nobler and greater things than wealth, only we should have thought you had sacri-

ficed the higher for the lower. He loved you as passionately, nearly as purely, as I do. You are free to change yet. You may leave me, and I will not utter a reproach. You will be very grand, very rich; and he said once to me that you were born for such a life as he can give you. I am, compared to him, a poor man, and must be always poor. I have not even a home to offer you yet. I wish I had not kissed you, Hester. I beg your pardon for taking you in my arms. It was my surprise which overpowered me. Good heavens! why do you neither speak nor look at me?"

She had been standing beside him as he poured out his rapid words, perfectly motionless, with her eyes still bent upon the ground. The instinctive coquetry of a woman who is sure she is beloved, was playing about his heart, and teaching her the innocent artifice which goes so far in befooling men. She let him run on in his jealous outpouring without interposing a glance or a word; but when he stopped, she lifted up her eyes to his face with a glance in them which he could not misunderstand.

"How foolish you are Carl!" were the words she uttered.

"Then you never loved anybody but me?" he persisted.

"Never!" she repeated, tightening her fingers about his hand.

Carl was afraid of stirring, lest she should take her hand from his, and sit down apart from him, and whenever she moved he held her more closely. The small flame died away, and the room grew very dark indeed, with no light except that which came through the open door from the lamp in the old house-place. They had said but very little to one another, when a clear, shrill, foreign voice caused Carl to start violently.

"Mademoiselle Hester, my angel," said Madame Lawson, "I must run away to my house for a little half-hour. Is there anybody talking with you, my little one?"

"It is only Lawson's mother," whispered Hester. "I must go out to her for a minute."

She was away for several minutes, and came back with the lamp in her hand. Then Carl sighed a profound sigh. The exquisite moment was gone, and could never return. Yet

he had not time to mourn over it; for though Hester seated herself in her own chair, she did not forbid him to stretch himself upon the hearth-rug at her feet, where her down-cast eyes could not fail to fall upon him.

"Oh, Hester!" he cried, with a sudden sorrow coming across his joy, "so that little child is dead! If I had not found you again, my dear love; if you had been altogether lost to me, little Hester would have been dearer to me than any one else in the world. Do you know that she loved you very dearly, and pined to see you once again? If you had but been at home in time to see her!"

"I did see her. She died in my arms," said Hester, in a sorrowful voice.

"God bless you, my Hester!" answered Carl.

"Let me tell you all about it," she said, looking down shyly upon his radiant face, for he could not keep his grief in mind whilst he was gazing up at her. "My father and Rose are reconciled to one another!"

She told him the whole history in low, quiet, timid tones, with fitful blushes and tears, which she did not wish him to see, and which he appeared not to notice. He did not interrupt

her, listening in a rapture and reverie of love, which made him willing to lie there for hours, hearing no sound but her dear voice, and seeing nothing but her dear face. Madame Lawson's little half-hour proved to be a very long one ; but neither of them was conscious of its length.



## CHAPTER XXII.

### *BROUGHT TO LIGHT.*

MADAME LAWSON, who was prone to avoid the day-light, which she declared not worthy of its name in England, proceeded homewards in the dusk, without meeting with any molestation. She had not paid her son and the garret any visit since the return of John Morley and Hester the night before ; and Lawson had failed to come down to his workroom, where indeed he had been but little during the last three months, though Mr. Waldron had continued to pay him and his mother the same wages he had formerly received from his master. Madame experienced no anxiety on his account. The affection existing between them was easy and cool ; and was made pleasant by the natural amiability of the light-hearted old woman. She knew her son to be quite capable of taking care of himself, and of making himself happy by means of his favourite drug. It had never troubled her that he should indulge in the use or abuse of opium. All men

must have their little vice to keep them virtuous was her equivocal maxim; and she was perfectly content that her son's should be so harmless, and give so little trouble. Was not Milord Waldron a hundred times more interesting for that little fault of his? When that poor little Madame Rose was gone to the good God, people would see! Had not she beheld with her own eyes Monsieur Morley carrying him as tenderly as if he had been a woman, and leaning over him with untiring solicitude, until he recovered. Oh, yes! *Cela saute aux yeux.*

She ascended the long flight of stairs briskly, feeling nearly equal to the difficult feat of singing as she mounted. No light whatever glimmered through the numerous chinks in the door, by which the fresh air was apt to find inconvenient admission. Good! Her son was gone to bed; and there would be nothing to do but look round, and perhaps say her rosary, for she had had very little time to attend to her soul of late. She lifted the latch, and entered the dark room, humming a merry little song. Probably her son had left the match-box and the lamp upon the table, and she groped her

way to it, stumbling against her *chaufferette*, which was in her way, and muttering a *malheur* against it. Her fingers feeling about the small table came in contact with something cold, clammy, and motionless. She laid her hand upon it, and found that it was a hand, which neither stirred, nor grew warm at her close touch. Another movement in the dark of her groping fingers brought them to the bowed head of her son, with the cold damp brow resting upon the table. Then she shook him, and called loudly into his ear; but he did not answer. The next moment she felt sure that he was dead.

Lawson's mother sat down in the dark to think, not caring to light a candle now. She was a foreigner in a foreign land; and only knew three persons to whom she could communicate this horrible surprise. If she were to rush downstairs screaming, and making an alarm, she would have all the neighbours crushing into her room, to whom she could say nothing, and who could say nothing to her. She was sorry for her son; and a few tears stole down her smooth old face unseen by any eye. But how did she know what

the laws of England would require of her ? It was possible, that being a stranger or of a different religion, they might demand the revenge of justice from her. Oh, that she had never quitted Burgundy ! What would become of her now ? What was she to do ?

After a few minutes' very troubled reflection, she decided that she could do nothing but go and tell Hester. Rose was asleep ; and Robert Waldron's residence she did not know. She raised herself slowly and with difficulty, as if old age had given her its first unkind touch. It seemed necessary now to lock the garret-door, lest any intruder should go in ; and with trembling fingers she took the key out of the wards within, and put it into the key-hole on the outside. She had not lighted a lamp, or looked round her room, and she left it in undisturbed quiet and darkness. Then she went down the long, narrow staircase slowly, and out into the court, and down the street, with her terrible story. It was a black shadow creeping across towards the glorified hour of Carl and Hester's betrothal.

Lawson's mother was about to enter John Morley's house, when a man who had been

loitering on the opposite pavement, strode quickly across the road, and stopped her. She started, with a half-uttered shriek, but Robert Waldron's voice quickly pacified her alarm.

"Good evening, Madame," he said; "I was waiting here to see you coming out, or going in. How are they all to-night?"

"Oh, Milord Waldron!" she cried, clinging to him entreatingly; "come with me, come! He is dead, my son Jean! You know my son? I come from finding him dead and cold, and I said I must go and tell Hester. But you will come, is it not so, Milord Waldron?"

"Calm yourself," said Robert, in a soothing tone. "Certainly I will return with you, Madame. Tell me your story tranquilly as we walk along. Did you say your son was dead?"

He walked up the street beside her, listening to her breathless and incoherent account; and thinking she was very probably mistaken, and that Lawson's drugged sleep was only a little more profound than usual. On the ground-floor of the house he procured a light, and went on up the stairs which he had

so often trodden for Hester's sake. He entered the room, and stood still for a moment to look about him. Lawson was sitting in the same chair and place where Hester had found him the night before, but his face was buried upon his arms on the table. Robert put the light down beside him, and touched his hand. There was no doubt that he was dead. A faint scent of laudanum pervaded the room, and the box which had held his favourite drug lay open and empty at his feet.

There was a shock to Robert Waldron's sensitive temperament in this discovery, which formerly would have made him eager to throw upon some one else the uncomfortable burden. But a great change, a new birth, had been effected in him. He touched the dead hand again solemnly and reverently ; and then turned to the forlorn old woman, who stood at his side, trembling from head to foot.

"Yes," he said, gently, "yes. Your poor son is dead. But be comforted : I will take care of you. He must have died sleeping ; he did not suffer much, and he was no longer young. He was not many years younger than you, Madame."

"I was seventeen when he was born," answered his mother, wiping her eyes somewhat needlessly. "Oh, Milord Waldron, send me back to Burgundy. I wish you would carry me back to Burgundy at once."

"You shall go," he said. "I will send you back as soon as possible. But now you must take a note for me to the doctor. You know Mr. Grant's house?"

"Oh, yes, yes!" she replied eagerly. "I will run; and then must I come back here?"

"No," said Robert, seeing how much she dreaded it; "you may go to Hester; but do not tell her a word—not one word—to-night."

Lawson's mother did not delay her departure, and Robert was soon left alone in the room with the dead man. He scarcely knew why he had not gone himself for Grant; and yet at the first moment of discovery it had seemed wrong to abandon the room again with its solitary and lifeless occupant, and he could not ask the frightened mother to stay in it. It was cold and dark. The hidden face of the corpse was something appalling. Robert shivered as he looked round him, and his memory grew very busy with his past visits

here. Of all the places in the world this poor garret was the one where he had seen Hester oftenest. And now in her stead there was a silent corpse, whose face he could not see, and whom he shrank from touching.

He looked, however, more steadfastly at the dead man, and saw that there had floated to the bare floor at his feet several sheets of paper, closely covered with writing. Robert stooped to gather them together, and carried them to the light. They were written in English, and could not be any special communication to his mother. Rather, no doubt, they were intended as some explanation of his deed. The poor wretch might have destroyed himself intentionally, and these lines would give his reason.


Standing at the other side of the table, with Lawson's corpse opposite to him, Robert Waldron put the scattered leaves together, and read their narrative. The first page was dated nearly four months back, on the night when John Morley fled from Little Aston; and the rest had been written at various times since, sometimes only a few words being inserted in trembling characters, whilst at others the writing was clear and firm, and proceeded



smoothly, as if the writer had found pleasure in his task.

"To-night I, Jean Lawson, begin to write my confession, which will clear all other persons of blame concerning the events which have happened in my master's house. Nobody will ever know how I have loved Hester. She has been my daughter, my queen, my goddess. I remember her mother, my master's wife, whose name was Elinor, coming into my workroom one day. She carried a tiny, white creature in her arms, and she said, 'Lawson, this is my little girl, and I wish everybody in the world to love my baby.' She smiled upon me like an angel; and I made a vow on the bended knees of my soul, that that little child should be dearer to me than any other creature in heaven or earth. After that my master's wife died.

"My master was too much wrapt up in his grief to take notice of his young child. He left her in the hands of a careless nurse, and I used to hear the baby's cries up into my workroom. Then I would run down and carry her away with me, and the nurse was content enough. I made her a cradle of an



old box, which I swung to the beams by ropes, and there the baby slept sometimes, while I sang and hammered away at my work. She soon learned to love the red and gold bindings, and as soon as she was old enough she would sit for hours at the end of the press, watching me lay on the gold leaf, and colour the margins. I taught her the A B C.

“My master was getting rich very fast. Well, that was good; that was what I wanted. There was not much spent in the house, and every year we put by a good large sum. I worked early and late, and never asked for more wages. Other masters came and said, I will give you twice, three times as much, but I never dreamt of leaving John Morley. We were gathering a *dot* for Hester, that she might be rich, and marry well. She was seven years old; I was forty-three; and my master was thirty-five. We both worked hard and spent little. Good! she would be very rich by the time when we must look out for a husband.

“If I shut my eyes now I see Hester again, as she was when she was seven years old. She began to take thought for her father, for

the house, for me. Already she was a little woman. Sometimes she laughed, and made me laugh ; but she was never merry and mischievous like other children. She had grown up too much with elderly people, who were always grave and often unhappy. But the child was not unhappy, that I swear. There was no truth in that plea of my master's for bringing another woman into his wife's place.

“ About this time I began to see Hester's mother, whether in vision or reality I cannot tell. But she came now and then, a faint, bright, thin appearance, as of shining mist, with her face in it, and sometimes a hand, with the finger pointing. I saw it as often by day as by night. Hester could never see it, though she would go so near as to touch the shining mist. I did not know whether to like this appearance or not ; but I grew so accustomed to it, that I always worked better when it was there. Moreover it helped me. If I doubted what device to work upon my binding, the finger pointed out one, which always proved to be the best. I suppose nobody in all the country round could do work like mine. But if I had taken higher wages from my master that

shining cloud would have vanished away. I have seen Hester, in her play, touch the shadowy hand without knowing it.

“But one day I went down to my master’s room with some finished work, and there was a girl with him, a laughing, giddy, flaunting girl, who was standing close beside him. I felt all at once a horrible dread and hatred creep through me. Something said, either in my ear, or only in my heart, ‘That woman will be John Morley’s second wife!’ They had not seen me, and I stole away with the cold sweat upon my face. After that the appearance was as of a woman in great sorrow, who looked at me with trouble in her eyes. But what could I do?

“It was a dreadful misfortune to happen. If my master had died, there was a little fortune for Hester, and I would have managed to carry on the business for her. But another wife, and other children, may be! I saw Hester about to become a step-child, a forlorn little drudge, forgotten and neglected by her father.

“I loathed that woman; I abhorred her. I hated the jingle of her piano, and her loud

singing, which reached me up in my quiet room, and scared away the shining vision. Then the money kept flying like sparks from an anvil. She must have her silks and satins and laces, and a drawing-room, and more servants. My master was befooled by her. I saw Hester would come to poverty. She was not unkind to her; she even made believe to love her, and whenever the child came to see me, we heard her shrill, hateful voice calling, 'Hester, Hetty!' Perhaps it was because she no longer played there, that her mother never came to my workroom.

"But I saw her once again, and I told Hester of it. I saw her sitting by my fire, with her head bowed down upon her hands, as one in very sore trouble of mind.

"Then my master's second wife brought disgrace upon him.

"I thought I could not hate her more than I had done, but I hated her a hundred-fold more after that. I saw my master the night after she left him go into Hester's room in the dead of the night, ready to take her life and his own. I had stayed in the house for very fear of that, to save the child. I remember striking

a boy a heavy blow for saying that Hester was her daughter.

“Ten years or so after that I saw the man who had been our ruin, prowling about our house, and I stole back to my room for one of the press-pins. He walked up and down, with his head bent, until he came close to where I stood in the entrance of the side-passage, and I struck him, as I would have set my heel upon any venomous snake. He fell in an instant, and I hurried home. My mother was come to live with me then. I cleaned the press-pin with ashes, and carried it back the next morning. I was not altogether sorry that I had missed killing him.

“But I missed killing her, too. My hand betrayed me a second time. It came about in this way. I was staying late on the Saturday night, and my master was gone out of the house, when all at once I heard the old jingle of the piano coming up to my room. I knew it could be no one else save her. I had waited for this hour many years. I took up my press-pin again, and crept down-stairs through the old printing rooms into the other part of the house. The drawing-room door was ajar, and

I looked in. She was sitting at her piano, with her back towards me, and she did not hear me go in. I thought she was dead after I struck her ; and I felt glad that I had revenged Hester, my master, and myself. Then I went home.

"Hester came in just now. They are come back, her and her father, and are going down to their own house though they know she is there. I shall never enter it again. Sometimes I think it would be well for me to go, as my mother wishes me, to Burgundy ; but then I have no money. We are all poor ; my master, Hester, and myself. I am writing this to explain to my master, and to any other persons he may think fit to show it to, how all these things have come about.

"I did everything for the sake of Hester, who has been as the apple of my eye ever since I saw her first, a small, white creature, in her mother's arms."

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### *CHECK-MATED.*

ROBERT WALDRON read the papers before him with an aching heart. Where was his punishment to cease? At what other points in his career was the ever-widening circle of his early sin to reach him? He had never suspected Lawson's enmity all these years; and now it had wrought so strongly, being baffled and thrown back upon itself, that it had driven him to suicide. The sound of Grant's foot upon the stairs was welcome, yet when he entered Robert could not look him in the face. He only spoke in a broken and smothered voice.

"The poor fellow has destroyed himself," he said.

"No," answered Grant, almost cheerfully, "I have been expecting this any time for the last twelve months. He consulted me for a heart-disease, for which he was using opium, the only relief he could have. I knew he could not last long; but it is possible he may have met with a little excitement which hastened the end. This is no case of suicide."



"Thank God!" cried Robert. Grant's words were an untold relief to him. If they only proved correct when he came to examine the man, he would take heart, and go forward bravely to meet whatever lay beyond him in the future.

"You had better go to my house, and wait for me there," said Grant, and Robert took his advice willingly. Grant followed him in the course of an hour, and verified his statement. Lawson's opium box had been emptied, but that had not caused his death, which was the result of an access of the disease, long anticipated by them both. Robert gave him his confession to read, and Grant ran through it rapidly.

"Strange!" he said. "Strange that this never occurred to me, at least! I felt reluctant to lay the sin at John Morley's door; yet I missed the clue from not having known Lawson long enough. Shall we make this paper public?"

"To what end?" asked Robert. "Scarcely any person besides ourselves knows anything of the past. It was written for John Morley, and we will give it to him. Let him do what he likes with it."

"And the mother?" suggested Grant.

"I will send her back to Burgundy," he answered; "a small pension will make her happy. Strange tales will she have to tell of English life!"

He smiled a little sadly, but went home with a heart the lighter because it had missed having a great increase to its burden. Early the next morning he presented himself at John Morley's door, which was opened to him by Lawson's mother, her face somewhat troubled, and the fine wrinkles about her eyes strongly marked, but bearing no light of malice or cunning about them.

"Well," was all she could utter, "my son?"

"He is dead," said Robert; "you have not spoken a word to Hester?"

"Not one word!" replied madame. "The young curé was with her when I returned; alone, monsieur, absolutely alone! These English manners do not please me. Bah! The little one permitted him to kiss her before he went. I thought Milord Waldron will be discontent; but they did not see me. Then my son is veritably dead?"

"You shall go home to Ecquemonville at once," replied Robert. "I will send my servant

with you to start you from Folkestone; and I intend to allow you a small pension."

"Seigneur!" cried the old woman, clapping her hands together, "that is good! I shall live again in the sunshine, and sing my little songs to those who love them! He was not a bad son, monsieur, and I grieve for him; but it was very *triste* here in England, and he was morose, sombre. If mademoiselle marries the curé I shall have no more pleasure in England. Wherefore do you not persist in marrying her?"

Robert made no answer, for Hester was passing through the entrance, and came forward to speak to him. There was a new light in her eyes, and a colour on her grave face, which he understood well. He gave her the packet for her father, and then went away, for the hour was drawing near, when the quiet funeral of his little child would start from John Morley's door.

It was the evening of the same day that Carl, who had been walking with Robert through the park towards Aston Court, happened to encounter Miss Waldron on his return. They met almost upon the spot where he had

first spoken of his love for Hester. He recollected it distinctly, and her conduct afterwards, which had effected his separation from his first church. But Carl's charity was of the order which hopeth all things, endureth all things, and never faileth. She had once been his friend, and to her he had often poured out his heart, when it was overcharged. A halo was about her still, for the sake of past times, and, let it be owned, for the sake of the hopeless love she had borne for him, which had perhaps been the real spring of all her after unkindness. He approached her with an outstretched hand, which she feigned not to see.


"Mr. Bramwell," she said, coldly, "you have taken your own course, I believe. I warned you against Hester Morley; I warned you in ample time, but you followed your own rash and unregenerate nature. I trust you may never repent of it."

"I never shall repent of it," answered Carl, warmly. "Thank God, Hester will be my wife as soon as I have a home ready for her! But let us be friends again, Miss Waldron, though I neglected your advice. Your brother and I are friends at last; your father loves me and

Hester; do not let there be coldness and estrangement between us. We may see each other often. When we do meet let us meet as friends."

"There is no unfriendliness on my part," said Miss Waldron, frigidly. "With due consideration of the difference in our position, I am quite willing to meet you on a proper footing. Hester also. I have shown her many kindnesses, and no conduct of hers can efface the remembrance of them from my memory. You may give my best wishes to her, Mr. Bramwell."

She walked on with a stately step, leaving Carl in as uncomfortable and irritated a frame of mind as was possible to him. But her heart was swelling with mortification and disappointment. She could not bear to think of Hester married to Carl, eloquent and popular, with a growing fame, while she remained single and obscure in the retirement of Little Aston. She ran through the list of chances which, in the pride of her youth and position, she had cast away; and she sighed bitterly over them. Only one remained to her; and that was David Scott. True he was very deaf, so deaf that




she could not whisper gentle hints into his ear ; but he looked at her very significantly. He was a good preacher, moreover, and sooner or later would make a mark, as Dr. Hervey assured her. With her aid, what height might he not attain ? She gained her room, and deliberated long upon the question. Then she reached out her desk, selected the paper which bore the crest of her family, and wrote the following epistle :—

“MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—Though our friendship has reached a point when I might well address you by your Christian name, my pen still refuses to write it. I feel as if I must receive your sanction for so endearing a familiarity. Yet David is a very dear name to me. I wonder if men are as susceptible to the dread of making too close advances as women like myself are ? I can very well imagine that when a young man, however worthy, looks up to a woman who occupies a prominent position, either for her rank, her wealth, or her piety, he may say to himself, ‘Ah ! such a being is not for me !’ The less worthy of your sex are more adventurous. Under a pretext of friend-

ship Carl Bramwell advanced so near to me that he had well nigh gained his point, had not the snare been broken, and I had escaped. How thankful I am now that he did not win upon me by his specious eloquence! I never knew till of late the difference between real and fictitious merit. Since I have known you my eyes have been opened indeed! Your last letter lies before me: every word in it a precious and polished gem; they come from your heart to my heart.

"I wonder if you can understand that we are equals. If I possess advantages denied to you, on the other hand Providence has bestowed upon you gifts mysteriously withheld from me. I acknowledge this. Dear David, your intrinsic merit makes you too lowly in your own eyes. You could never be guilty of the presumption of Carl Bramwell; yet it would be no presumption in you. You are the true gold; he is only the glittering bauble. Oh, I am afraid you will misunderstand me! Shall I tear up this letter which I have written with a throbbing heart and tearful eyes? No. You may still be saying to yourself, 'Such a being is not for me!' You would be a help



indeed to me on the upward and onward path. How I should lean upon you! How I would assist you to the best of my poor abilities! My father has a great regard for you. He asked me—*me*—the other day why you did not marry. I could give him no satisfactory reply. Shall I ever be able to do so?

“It would never strike your disinterested mind to inquire into my worldly circumstances. If I should ever marry without my father’s approbation, I should even then be blessed with £500 a year in my own right. But my father has often urged me to select a partner for life, and leaves my choice unbiassed. Until now I could not make up my mind. It is made up now. I shall marry but one being, or remain for ever single. If you wish to know his name, I will tell you in my next letter.

“Oh, I am very much afraid that you will misunderstand me! I shall await your reply in great agitation. Do not prolong it, my very dear friend. Send me but a word, a line, by the bearer.

“Yours for ever,

“SOPHIA W.”




Miss Waldron was satisfied with her effusion, and slept soundly after it. In the morning she despatched her missive by a footman, who received orders that the carriage was to take him and his weighty packet to the lodgings of Mr. Scott, and wait until an answer was ready. She partly hoped that he would catch the hint, and return to her in the carriage; but only a short note was brought back. She opened it, and read it with unutterable emotions.

“DEAR MISS WALDRON,—I understand you quite well. Unluckily I am engaged to a cousin in Glasgow, who would not give me up, I am sure. I shall keep your letters as a mark of your esteem. Believe me,

“Yours faithfully,

“DAVID SCOTT.”

David Scott was wise in his generation. No troubles disturbed his relations with his church; and though Miss Waldron was distant she was always deferential. He married his cousin in due time, and they were received as formal visitors at Aston Court. Miss Waldron continued to shed a bright and unwearied light upon the little church at Little Aston.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

### *LAST WORDS.*

HESTER'S sorrow for Lawson was very real, but it hung over her present happiness only as a thin cloud shadows a bright sky. They told her that his sudden death had been long impending; and though they did not show her the confession he had written, Carl said he had owned to being guilty of those acts of violence and revenge which they had all attributed to her father. Carl had still a few days to stay at Little Aston, days of a quiet but profound gladness; and then he went back to his charge in London, whom he astonished by a happy and buoyant eloquence in his sermons which they had not remarked in them before.

Rose lingered through the winter, dying so slowly and peacefully that it could scarcely be called death—"the hours gliding by with down upon their feet." A gleam of her old light-heartedness returned now and then, with a pathetic beauty in it; the feebleness of her smiles, and the faint ripple of laughter from her lips

smote painfully upon John Morley's spirit. Yet he knew it was best for her to go. Some lives cannot blossom and bear fruit until they are transplanted into more genial climes. She was too weak a creature to work any work worthy of repentance, such as a stronger woman may do, who has fallen even lower than she had done. It was well for him to shield and cherish her, as she descended with slow, sure steps down to the portal through which she must pass alone. But he could have done nothing else; and he thanked God for the great boon granted to him.

"Are you very sorry that I must die?" she asked one day, with wistful eyes and voice, when her time was almost ended. "Would you wish me to live, and grow strong again?"

"No," he said, his heart swelling with great pity, yet truthful to her, for truth was kindest.

Rose turned away her face from him and the light, but he saw a quiver of pain tremble upon it.

"My child," he said, very tenderly, "there will be no sin there; and 'sorrow and sighing shall flee away.' It is a good thing for you to be taken out of the world. But is there

anything you desire, anything you can wish to ask of me, which you shrink from asking?"

"No," she answered, with a sob.

"Do you not wish," he continued, in a lower and more tender voice, "to see him, Robert, once more, before you die?"

"No," she repeated, opening her blue eyes, and looking into his face like a child; "why should I? I have almost forgotten him. He never comes into my thoughts now. Let Hester tell him, if she will, that I have forgotten him,—the best thing I can do."

It was but a few days after this, when he was watching her alone in the first quiet dawn of a spring morning, that she called him to her side, with a sharp, quick tone, which told him that the last moment was come. All the house was silent with that peculiar atmosphere of silence which comes with the night, but which is more felt during the solemn and irresistible approach of light to the world. John Morley was alone with the wife whom he had so passionately loved. He bent over her with a bitter pang piercing him to the heart, yet with gratitude and courage. She raised her eyes to his for the last time.

"You forgive me fully," she whispered, "as fully as God forgives?"

"As fully as God forgives!" he repeated.


"Kiss me," she said, "kiss my lips, as you kissed my child when she was dying."

John Morley bent his face to hers, and laid a long, solemn, agonized kiss upon her lips; and when he lifted up his head, he saw that she was gone from him for ever.

Rose died early in March, and before the end of April John Morley and Hester left Little Aston altogether, taking with them but few of their poor household goods, except the great chair in which Hester's mother had died, the volumes Lawson had bound for her when she was a child, and John Morley's favourite books. Robert Waldron and Carl had chosen a house for them in London, and Annie had been there for a fortnight to superintend the furnishing of it. It was a sunny house, looking upon a square where the lime-trees were just opening their leaf-buds, and two or three chestnut-trees spreading their first broad leaf-lets to the spring light and breeze; a rural home compared to the gloomy decayed old house in Little Aston. Mr. Waldron had

procured a situation for John Morley as librarian, with a salary of £300 a year; but this new house was suited to an income fully twice that sum. It was within a pleasant distance of Carl's chapel. The arrangements within were altogether those of a new household, consisting of other members besides Hester and her father. There was a room, still empty and unfurnished, which would make a good study by-and-by. Hester understood it very well, though nothing had been said to her on the subject. This was Carl's home, which she was to occupy a few months yet without him, out of regard to her father's new grief. She would have time to grow at home in it, to give to it the impress of her own taste, to make it more and more ready for him to come to it; and then——

The day after she and her father had entered their new dwelling, Robert Waldron called, and Hester went to receive him alone. She had not seen him since the morning she had stood beside him, looking down on the sweet pale face of his dead child. He appeared much older, but there was an expression of goodness and earnestness upon his face which h



not been seen there in former times. He smiled gravely but tenderly upon her, as she advanced to meet him with some shyness and hesitation in her manner. The hand she extended to him bore his ring, which she had slipped on her finger unthinkingly as she came across it in her unpacking. Robert kept her hand in his, looking down upon it, and upon her face, with an air of mingled pain and pleasure.

"Thank you for wearing my ring, dear Hester," he said, "Carl knows of it."

"I have not told him," she answered, with a hasty blush.

"But I have," he continued, smiling; "he knows it is only a love which might have been, and he does not grudge me the shadow when he has the substance. Hester, I have become a member of his church."

"I am very glad," she said, with tears in her clear, frank eyes.

"We shall be friends," Robert went on, "we three, as long as we live. Carl will let me come here as familiarly as if I were his brother and yours; and I shall be here very often. Do you know, dear friend, that I have been invited by my father's old constituency to re-

present them in Parliament? I shall live in London more than half my time, and so not be very far from you. Do you think my visits will be a trouble to your father?"

"I am sure they will not, after a while," said Hester.

"Does he grieve very much for Rose," he asked.

"Yes," she answered; "but not as he did before. He is cheerful now, and takes a good deal of interest in everything that happens to us both. He has been all over this new house with me, noticing everything, and he is more than content; he is glad to be away from the old place, and to be beginning a new life. It is a new life to him."

"Did she leave no message for me?" said Robert, after a pause.

"None," she replied, "only that she had almost forgotten you, and that it was best so."

"Poor Rose! poor little Hetty!" he said, as if speaking to himself only. "Yet indeed I was little more than a boy."

He could not altogether relinquish his old plea, which had possessed truth enough to give him some solace in former times. He looked



back from a calm height upon all the past, and could trace the hard and crooked paths into which he had strayed. He had escaped from them, but the mire and clay clung to him even yet, and he stood solitary upon the height he had gained at last. "Hester," he said, "my father promises himself to be present at your wedding in the autumn."

"And Miss Waldron?" exclaimed Hester, in alarm.

"No, not Miss Waldron," answered Robert, smiling; "certainly not. Do you think my sister would come? No; my father and I will be there, if you will give us leave."

"Yes, come," said Hester, heartily; and then, remembering herself, was covered with confusion so pretty and delightful, that Robert Waldron could scarcely restrain a sigh of bitterness and regret.

"And poor old Lawson's mother?" said Hester, in a tone of questioning.

"I had a letter from her the other day," answered Robert; "she is enchanted to be at home again in Burgundy. Hester, I have the mark of Lawson's blow yet; I shall carry it to my grave."

He lifted the hair which fell over his temples, and pushed it back. There was a seam and scar still upon the skin, and, as he said, it would be there till he died. It was but an emblem and a symbol of the inner and spiritual wound, healed indeed, and with as much of the pain taken away as could ever be removed in this life; but a wound still, a blemish, a brand upon the beauty of his future life. Carl had come into the room as he spoke, and looked with Hester upon it; and she, putting her hand into his with a tender clasp, bent forward and kissed the scar.

THE END.

111

# A CATALOGUE

OF

## HENRY S. KING & CO.'S PUBLICATIONS.

**SOME BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE XVIIITH CENTURY.** By W. D. CHRISTIE, C.B., Author of "The Life of the First Earl of Shaftesbury."

**THE PORT OF REFUGE; or Counsel and Aid to Shipmasters in Difficulty, Doubt, or Distress.** By MANLEY HOPKINS, Author of "A Handbook of Average," "A Manual of Insurance," &c. Cr. 8vo.

SUBJECTS:—The Shipmaster's Position and Duties.—Agents and Agency.—Average.—Bottomry, and other Means of Raising Money.—The Charter-Party, and Bill-of-Lading.—Stoppage in Transitu; and the Shipowner's Lien.—Collision.

**THE PEARL OF THE ANTILLES, or an Artist in Cuba.** By WALTER GOODMAN. Crown 8vo.

**WHY AM I A CHRISTIAN?** By VISCOUNT STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE. Crown 8vo.

**THE ROMANTIC ANNALS OF A NAVAL FAMILY.** By MRS. ARTHUR TRAHERNE. Crown 8vo. 10s. 6d.

**SHORT LECTURES ON THE LAND LAWS.** Delivered before the Working Men's College. By T. LEAN WILKINSON. Crown 8vo. 2s. Limp cloth.

"A very handy and intelligible epitome of the general principles of existing land laws."—*Standard*.

"A very clear and lucid statement as to the condition of the present land laws

which govern our country. These Lectures possess the advantage of not being loaded with superfluous matter."—*Civil Service Gazette*.

**A SCOTCH COMMUNION SUNDAY.** By the Author of "The Recreations of a Country Parson." 1 vol. Cr. 8vo.

**STUDIES AND ROMANCES.** By H. SCHÜTZ WILSON. 1 vol. Crown 8vo. Price 7s. 6d.

Shakespeare in Blackfriars.—The Loves of Goethe.—Romance of the Thames.—An Exalted Horn.—Two Sprigs of Edelweiss.—Between Moor and Main.—An Episode of the Terror.—Harry Ormond's

Christmas Dinner.—Agnes Bernauerin.—"Yes" or "No"?—A Model Romance.—The Story of Little Jenny.—Dining.—The Record of a Vanished Life.

65, Cornhill; & 12, Paternoster Row, London.

**THE RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF IRELAND :**

Primitive, Papal, and Protestant, including the Evangelical Missions, Catholic Agitations, and Church Progress of the last half century. By JAMES GODKIN, Author of "Ireland, her Churches," etc. 1 vol. 8vo.

**SARA COLERIDGE, MEMOIR & LETTERS**

OF. 2 vols. Crown 8vo. With 2 Portraits. Price 24s.

**LOMBARD STREET. A Description of the**

Money Market. By WALTER BAGEHOT. Large cr. 8vo. 7s. 6d.

"A comprehensive guide to the Money | Stock and Private Banks, Bill Brokers,  
Market, the Bank of England, the Joint | &c., &c."

**POLITICAL WOMEN. By SUTHERLAND**

MENZIES. 2 vols. Post 8vo.

**EGYPT AS IT IS. By HERR HEINRICH**

STEPHAN, the German Postmaster-General. Crown 8vo. With a new Map of the Country.

**'ILÂM Ẓ NÂS. Historical Tales and Anecdotes**

of the Times of the Early Khalifahs. Translated from the Arabic Originals. By Mrs. GODFREY CLERK, Author of "The Antipodes and Round the World." Crown 8vo. Price 7s.

**IN STRANGE COMPANY ; or, The Note Book of**

a Roving Correspondent. By JAMES GREENWOOD, "The Amateur Casual." Crown 8vo.

**THEOLOGY AND MORALITY. Being Essays by**

the REV. J. LLEWELLYN DAVIES. 1 vol. 8vo. 7s. 6d.

Essays on Questions of Belief and Practice.—The Debts of Theology to Secular Influences.—The Christian Theory of Duty.—Weak Points in Utilitarianism.—Nature and Prayer.—The Continuity of

Creation.—The Beginnings of the Church. Erastus and Excommunication.—Pauperism as produced by Wealth.—Combinations of Agricultural Labourers.—Communism.

**A NEW VOLUME OF ACADEMIA ESSAYS.**

Edited by the Most Reverend ARCHBISHOP MANNING.

The Philosophy of Christianity.—Mystical Elements of Religion.—Controversy with the Agnostics.—A Reasoning Thought.—Darwinism brought to Book.—Mr. Mill on Liberty of the Press.—Christianity in

Relation to Society.—The Religious Condition of Germany.—The Philosophy of Bacon.—Catholic Laymen and Scholastic Philosophy.

65, Cornhill ; & 12, Paternoster Row, London.

**THE GOVERNMENT OF THE NATIONAL DEFENCE.** By JULES FAVRE. Demy 8vo. 1 vol.

**THE RECONCILIATION OF RELIGION AND SCIENCE.** Being Essays by the REV. J. W. FOWLE, M.A. 1 vol., 8vo. 10s. 6d.

The Divine Character of Christ.—Science and Immortality.—Morality and Immortality.—Christianity and Immortality.—Religion and Fact.—The Miracles of God.—The Miracles of Man.—A Scien-

tific Account of Inspiration.—The Inspiration of the Jews.—The Inspiration of the Bible.—The Divinity of Christ and Modern Thought.—The Church and the Working Classes.

**THE FAYOUM; OR, ARTISTS IN EGYPT.**

A Tour with M. Gérôme and others. By J. LENOIR. Crown 8vo, cloth. Illustrated. 7s. 6d.

"The sketches, both by pen and pencil, are extremely interesting. Unlike books of travel of the ordinary kind, this volume

is full of agreeable episodes told in a bright and sparkling style."

"A pleasantly written and very readable book."—*Examiner*.

**TENT LIFE WITH ENGLISH GYPSIES IN NORWAY.** By HUBERT SMITH. In 8vo, cloth. Five full-page Engravings, and 31 smaller Illustrations, with Map of the Country showing Routes. Price 21s.

**THE GATEWAY TO THE POLYNIA; or, a Voyage to Spitzbergen.** By CAPTAIN JOHN C. WELLS, R.N. In 8vo, cloth. Profusely Illustrated. Price 21s.

**A WINTER IN MOROCCO.** By AMELIA PERRIER. Large crown 8vo. Illustrated. Price 10s. 6d.

"An acceptable and entertaining book to those who are not conversant with the

manners and customs of Moorish society. It is likely to become popular."

**AN AUTUMN TOUR IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA.** By LIEUT.-COLONEL JULIUS GEORGE MEDLEY. Crown 8vo. Price 5s.

**NEWMARKET & ARABIA: an Examination of the Descent of Racers and Coursers.** By ROGER D. UPTON. Crown 8vo. Illustrated. Price 9s.

"It contains a good deal of truth; it comes just at a time when some such book is needed: and it abounds with valuable suggestions."—*Saturday Review*.

"A book of the highest importance to breeders of race-horses, and indeed to all

who take an interest in horse-flesh."—*Standard*.

"The pedigrees of the famous horses which he gives are alone worth double the price of the book."—*United Service Gazette*.

**LIVES OF ENGLISH POPULAR LEADERS.**No. 1. **STEPHEN LANGTON.**

By C. EDMUND MAURICE.

Crown 8vo. 7s. 6d.

"Mr. Maurice has written a very interesting book, which may be read with equal pleasure and profit."—*Morning Post*.

"The volume contains many interesting

details, including some important documents. It will amply repay those who read it, whether as a chapter of the constitutional history of England or as the life of a great Englishman."—*Spectator*.

**ECHOES OF A FAMOUS YEAR.**

By HARRIET PARR,

Author of "The Life of Jeanne d'Arc," "In the Silver Age," &amp;c.

Crown 8vo. 8s. 6d.

"A graceful and touching, as well as truthful account of the Franco-Prussian War. Those who are in the habit of reading books to children will find this at once instructive and delightful."—*Public Opinion*.

"Miss Parr has the great gift of charming simplicity of style; and if children are not interested in her book, many of their seniors will be."—*British Quarterly Review*.

**CABINET PORTRAITS.**

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF LIVING STATESMEN.

By T. WEMYSS REID.

1 vol. crown 8vo. 7s. 6d.

"We have never met with a work which we can more unreservedly praise. The sketches are absolutely impartial."—*Athenæum*.

"We can heartily commend his work."—*Standard*.

"The 'Sketches of Statesmen' are drawn with a master hand."—*Yorkshire Post*.

**THE ENGLISH CONSTITUTION.**

By WALTER BAGEHOT.

A New Edition, revised and corrected, with an Introductory Dissertation on recent changes and events. Crown 8vo. 7s. 6d.

"A pleasing and clever study on the department of higher politics."—*Guardian*.

clearly what the efficient part of the English Constitution really is."—*Fall Mall Gazette*.

"No writer before him had set out so

"Clear and practical."—*Globe*.

**REPUBLICAN SUPERSTITIONS.**

ILLUSTRATED BY THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES.  
INCLUDING A CORRESPONDENCE WITH M. LOUIS BLANC.

By MONCURE D. CONWAY.

Crown 8vo. 5s.

"Au moment où j'écris ceci, je reçois d'un écrivain très distingué d'Amérique, M. Conway, une brochure qui est un frappant tableau des maux et des dangers qui résultent aux Etats Unis de l'institu-

tion présidentielle."—*M. Louis Blanc*.

"A very able exposure of the most plausible fallacies of Republicanism, by a writer of remarkable vigour and purity of style."—*Standard*.

---

**THE GENIUS of CHRISTIANITY UNVEILED,  
BEING ESSAYS BY WILLIAM GODWIN.**

AUTHOR OF "POLITICAL JUSTICE," ETC.

Never before published. 1 vol. crown 8vo. 7s. 6d.

"Interesting as the frankly expressed thoughts of a remarkable man, and as a contribution to the history of scepticism."  
—*Extract from the Editor's Preface.*  
"Few have thought more clearly and directly than William Godwin, or expressed

their reflections with more simplicity and unreserve."—*Examiner.*

"The deliberate thoughts of Godwin deserve to be put before the world for reading and consideration."—*Athenæum.*

---

**THE PELICAN PAPERS.**

REMINISCENCES AND REMAINS OF A DWELLER IN THE WILDERNESS.

By JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE.

Crown 8vo. 6s.

"Written somewhat after the fashion of Mr. Helps's 'Friends in Council.'"—*Examiner.*

"Will well repay perusal by all thought-

ful and intelligent readers."—*Liverpool Leader.*

"The 'Pelican Papers' make a very readable volume."—*Civilian.*

---

**SOLDIERING AND SCRIBBLING.**

By ARCHIBALD FORBES,

Of the *Daily News*,

Author of "My Experience of the War between France and Germany."

Crown 8vo. 7s. 6d.

"All who open it will be inclined to read through for the varied entertainment which it affords."—*Daily News.*

"There is a good deal of instruction to

outsiders touching military life, in this volume."—*Evening Standard.*

"There is not a paper in the book which is not thoroughly readable and worth reading."—*Scotsman.*

---

**BRIEFS AND PAPERS.**

BEING SKETCHES OF THE BAR AND THE PRESS.

By TWO IDLE APPRENTICES.

Crown 8vo. 7s. 6d.

"They are written with spirit and knowledge, and give some curious glimpses into what the majority will regard as strange and unknown territories."—*Daily News.*

"This is one of the best books to while away an hour and cause a generous laugh that we have come across for a long time."—*John Bull.*

---

65, Cornhill; & 12, Paternoster Row, London.



## THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC SERIES.

**M**ESSRS. HENRY S. KING & CO. have the pleasure to announce that under this title they are issuing a SERIES of POPULAR TREATISES, embodying the results of the latest investigations in the various departments of Science at present most prominently before the world.

Although these Works are not specially designed for the instruction of beginners, still, as they are intended to address the

non-scientific public, they will be, as far as possible, explanatory in character, and free from technicalities. The object of each author will be to bring his subject as near as he can to the general reader.

The volumes will all be crown 8vo size, well printed on good paper, strongly and elegantly bound, and will sell in this country at a price not exceeding Five Shillings.

Prospectuses of the Series may be had of the Publishers.

Already published,  
Third Edition.

### THE FORMS OF WATER IN RAIN AND RIVERS, ICE AND GLACIERS.

By J. TYNDALL, LL.D., F.R.S.

With 26 Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 5s.

"One of Professor Tyndall's best scientific treatises."—*Standard*.

"The most recent findings of science and experiment respecting the nature and properties of water in every possible form, are discussed with remarkable brevity, clearness, and fullness of exposition."—*Graphic*.

"With the clearness and brilliancy of

language which have won for him his fame, he considers the subject of ice, snow, and glaciers."—*Morning Post*.

"Before starting for Switzerland next summer every one should study 'The forms of water.'"—*Globe*.

"Eloquent and instructive in an eminent degree."—*British Quarterly*.

Second Edition.

### PHYSICS AND POLITICS;

Or, Thoughts on the Application of the Principles of "Natural Selection" and "Inheritance" to Political Society.

By WALTER BAGEHOT.

Crown 8vo. 4s.

"On the whole we can recommend the book as well deserving to be read by thoughtful students of politics."—*Saturday Review*.

"Able and ingenious."—*Spectator*.

"The book has been well thought out,

and the writer speaks without fear."—*National Reformer*.

"Contains many points of interest both to the scientific man and to the mere politician."—*Birmingham Daily Gazette*.

Just out.

### FOODS.

By DR. EDWARD SMITH. Profusely Illustrated. Price 5s.

The Volumes now preparing are—

**PRINCIPLES OF MENTAL PHYSIOLOGY.** With their applications to the Training and Discipline of the Mind, and the Study of its Morbid Conditions. By W. B. CARPENTER, LL.D., M.D., F.R.S., &c. Illustrated.

**THE STUDY OF SOCIOLOGY.** By HERBERT SPENCER.

**ANIMAL MECHANICS;** or, WALKING, SWIMMING, and FLYING. By Dr. J. BELL PETTIGREW, M.D., F.R.S. 125 Illustrations.

**MIND AND BODY: THE THEORIES OF THEIR RELATIONS.** By ALEXANDER BAIN, LL.D., Professor of Logic at the University of Aberdeen. Illustrated.

65, Cornhill; & 12, Paternoster Row, London.

**STREAMS FROM HIDDEN SOURCES.** By  
B. MONTGOMERIE RANKING. Crown 8vo. 6s.

Third Edition.

**THE SECRET OF LONG LIFE.** Dedicated by  
Special Permission to Lord St. Leonards. Large crown 8vo. 5s.

"A charming little volume, written with singular felicity of style and illustration."

—*Times*.

"A very pleasant little book, which is always, whether it deal in paradox or earnest, cheerful, genial, scholarly."

—*Spectator*.

"The bold and striking character of the

whole conception is entitled to the warmest admiration."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

"We should recommend our readers to get this book . . . because they will be amused by the jovial miscellaneous and cultured gossip with which he strews his pages."—*British Quarterly Review*.

Second Edition.

**CHANGE OF AIR AND SCENE.** A Physician's  
Hints about Doctors, Patients, Hygiène, and Society; with Notes  
of Excursions for health in the Pyrenees, and amongst the Watering-  
places of France (Inland and Seaward), Switzerland, Corsica, and  
the Mediterranean. By DR. ALPHONSE DONNÉ. Large post  
8vo. Price 9s.

"A very readable and serviceable book. . . . The real value of it is to be found in the accurate and minute information given with regard to a large number of places which have gained a reputation on the continent for their mineral waters."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

"Not only a pleasant book of travel but also a book of considerable value."—*Morning Post*.

"A popular account of some of the most charming health resorts of the Continent;

with suggestive hints about keeping well and getting well, which are characterised by a good deal of robust common sense."—*British Quarterly*.

"A singularly pleasant and chatty as well as instructive book about health."—*Guardian*.

"A useful and pleasantly-written book, containing many valuable hints on the general management of health from a shrewd and experienced medical man."—*Graphic*.

**AN ESSAY ON THE CULTURE OF THE  
OBSERVING POWERS OF CHILDREN,** especially in con-  
nection with the Study of Botany. By ELIZA A. YOUNG.  
Edited, with Notes and a Supplement, by JOSEPH PAYNE,  
F.C.P., Author of "Lectures on the Science and Art of Education,"  
&c. Crown 8vo. 2s. 6d.

"The little book, now under notice, is expressly designed to make the earliest instruction of children a mental discipline. Miss Young presents in her work the ripe results of educational experience reduced to a system, wisely conceiving that an education—even the most elementary—should be regarded as a discipline of the mental powers, and that the facts of external nature supply the most suitable materials for this discipline in the case of

children. She has applied that principle to the study of botany. This study, according to her just notions on the subject, is to be fundamentally based on the exercise of the pupil's own powers of observation. He is to see and examine the properties of plants and flowers at first hand, not merely to be informed of what others have seen and examined."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

**MISS YOUMANS' FIRST BOOK OF BOTANY.**

Designed to cultivate the observing powers of Children. From the Author's latest Stereotyped Edition. New and Enlarged Edition, with 300 Engravings. Crown 8vo. 5s.

It is but rarely that a school-book appears which is at once so novel in plan, so successful in execution, and so suited to the general want, as to command universal and unqualified approbation, but such has been the case with Miss Youmans' First Book of Botany. Her work is an outgrowth of

the most recent scientific views, and has been practically tested by careful trial with juvenile classes, and it has been everywhere welcomed as a timely and invaluable contribution to the improvement of primary education.

**THE HISTORY OF THE NATURAL CREA-**

**TION** ; being a Series of Popular Scientific Lectures on the General Theory of Progression of Species ; with a Dissertation on the Theories of Darwin, Goethe, and Lamarck : more especially applying them to the Origin of Man, and to other Fundamental Questions of Natural Science connected therewith. By PROFESSOR ERNST HÆCKEL, of the University of Jena. 8vo. With Woodcuts and Plates.

**AN ARABIC AND ENGLISH DICTIONARY**

OF THE KORAN. By MAJOR J. PENRICE, B.A. 4to. Price 21s.

**MODERN GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE.** By

T. G. JACKSON. Crown 8vo. Price 5s.

"Worthy of the perusal of all who are interested in art or architecture."—*Standard*.

**A LEGAL HANDBOOK FOR ARCHITECTS.**

By EDWARD JENKINS and JOHN RAYMOND. Crown 8vo. Price 5s.

**CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH PSYCHOLOGY.**

From the French of Professor TH. RIBOT. An Analysis of the Views and Opinions of the following Metaphysicians, as expressed in their Writings.

JAMES MILL,  
A. BAIN.

JOHN STUART MILL.  
GEORGE H. LEWES.

HERBERT SPENCER.  
SAMUEL BAILEY.

Large post 8vo.

**PHYSIOLOGY FOR PRACTICAL USE.** By

various Writers. Edited by JAMES HINTON. With 50 Illustrations.

65, Cornhill ; & 12, Paternoster Row, London.

**HEALTH AND DISEASE**, as influenced by the Daily, Seasonal and other Cyclical Changes in the Human System. By DR. EDWARD SMITH, F.R.S. A New Edition. 7s. 6d.

**PRACTICAL DIETARY FOR FAMILIES, SCHOOLS, AND THE LABOURING CLASSES.** By DR. EDWARD SMITH, F.R.S. A New Edition. Price 3s. 6d.

**CONSUMPTION IN ITS EARLY & REMEDIABLE STAGES.** By DR. EDWARD SMITH, F.R.S. A New Edition. 7s. 6d.

**A TREATISE ON RELAPSING FEVER.** By R. T. LYONS, Assistant-Surgeon, Bengal Army. Small post 8vo. 7s. 6d.

"A practical work thoroughly supported in its views by a series of remarkable cases."—*Standard*.

**IN QUEST OF COOLIES.** A South Sea Sketch. By JAMES L. A. HOPE. Second Edition. Crown 8vo. With 15 Illustrations from Sketches by the Author. Price 6s.

"Mr. Hope's description of the natives is graphic and amusing, and the book is altogether well worthy of perusal."—*Standard*.

"Lively and clever sketches."—*Athenæum*.

"This agreeably written and amusingly illustrated volume."—*Public Opinion*.

**THE NILE WITHOUT A DRAGOMAN.** By FREDERIC EDEN. Second Edition. In one vol. Crown 8vo, cloth. 7s. 6d.

"Should any of our readers care to imitate Mr. Eden's example, and wish to see things with their own eyes, and shift for themselves, next winter in Upper Egypt, they will find this book a very agreeable guide."—*Times*.

"We have in these pages the most minute description of life as it appeared on the banks of the Nile; all that could be

seen or was worth seeing in nature or in art is here pleasantly and graphically set down. It is a book to read during an autumn holiday."—*Spectator*.

"Gives, within moderate compass, a suggestive description of the charms, curiosities, dangers, and discomforts of the Nile voyage."—*Saturday Review*.

**ROUND THE WORLD IN 1870.** A Volume of Travels, with Maps. By A. D. CARLISLE, B.A., Trin. Coll., Camb. Demy 8vo. 16s.

"Makes one understand how going round the world is to be done in the quickest and pleasantest manner, and how the brightest and most cheerful of travellers did it with eyes wide open and keen attention all on the alert, with ready sympathies, with the happiest facility of hitting

upon the most interesting features of nature and the most interesting characteristics of man, and all for its own sake."—*Spectator*.

"We can only commend, which we do very heartily, an eminently sensible and readable book."—*British Quarterly Review*.

## MILITARY WORKS—continued.

**THE OPERATIONS OF THE GERMAN ARMIES IN FRANCE, FROM SEDAN TO THE END OF THE WAR OF 1870-1.** With Large Official Map. From the Journals of the Head-quarters Staff, by Major WM. BLUME. Translated by E. M. JONES, Major 20th Foot, late Professor of Military History, Sandhurst. Demy 8vo. Price 9s.

"The book is of absolute necessity to the military student. . . . The work is one of high merit and . . . has the advantage of being rendered into fluent English, and is accompanied by an excellent military map."—*United Service Gazette*.

"The work of translation has been well done; the expressive German idioms have been rendered into clear, nervous English without losing any of their original force; and in notes, prefaces, and introductions, much additional information has been given."—*Athenæum*.

"The work of Major von Blume in its

English dress forms the most valuable addition to our stock of works upon the war that our press has put forth. Major Blume writes with a clear consciousness much wanting in many of his country's historians, and Major Jones has done himself and his original alike justice by his vigorous yet correct translation of the excellent volume on which he has laboured. Our space forbids our doing more than commending it earnestly as the most authentic and instructive narrative of the second section of the war that has yet appeared."—*Saturday Review*.

**THE OPERATIONS OF THE SOUTH ARMY IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY, 1871.** Compiled from the Official War Documents of the Head-quarters of the Southern Army. By COUNT HERMANN VON WARTENSLEBEN, Colonel in the Prussian General Staff. Translated by Colonel C. H. VON WRIGHT. Demy 8vo, with Maps. Uniform with the above. Price 6s.

**HASTY INTRENCHMENTS.** By Colonel A. BRIALMONT. Translated by Lieutenant CHARLES A. EMPSON, R.A. Demy 8vo. Nine Plates. Price 6s.

"A valuable contribution to military literature."—*Athenæum*.

"In seven short chapters it gives plain directions for performing shelter-trenches, with the best method of carrying the necessary tools, and it offers practical illustrations of the use of hasty intrenchments on the field of battle."—*United Service Magazine*.

"It supplies that which our own textbooks give but imperfectly, viz., hints as

to how a position can best be strengthened by means . . . of such extemporised intrenchments and batteries as can be thrown up by infantry in the space of four or five hours . . . deserves to become a standard military work."—*Standard*.

"A clever treatise, short, practical and clear."—*Investor's Guardian*.

"Clearly and critically written."—*Wellington Gazette*.

**THE ARMY OF THE NORTH-GERMAN CONFEDERATION.** A Brief Description of its Organisation, of the different Branches of the Service and their 'Rôle' in War, of its Mode of Fighting, &c. By a PRUSSIAN GENERAL. Translated from the German by Col. EDWARD NEWDIGATE. Demy 8vo. 5s.

\* \* The authorship of this book was erroneously ascribed to the renowned General von Moltke, but there can be little doubt that it was written under his immediate inspiration.

65, Cornhill; & 12, Paternoster Row, London.

MILITARY WORKS—continued.

**CAVALRY FIELD DUTY.** By Major-General VON MIRUS. Translated by Captain FRANK S. RUSSELL, 14th (King's) Hussars. Crown 8vo, limp cloth. 7s. 6d.

\* \* This is the text-book of instruction in the German cavalry, and comprises all the details connected with the military duties of cavalry soldiers on service. The translation is made from a new edition, which contains the modifications intro-

duced consequent on the experiences of the late war. The great interest that students feel in all the German military methods, will, it is believed, render this book especially acceptable at the present time.

**STUDIES IN LEADING TROOPS.** By Colonel VON VERDY DÜ VERNIOIS. An authorised and accurate Translation by Lieutenant H. J. T. HILDYARD, 71st Foot. Parts I. and II. Demy 8vo. Price 7s.

\* \* General BEAUCHAMP WALKER says of this work:—"I recommend the first two numbers of Colonel von Verdy's 'Studies' to the attentive perusal of my brother officers. They supply a want which I have often felt during my service in this country, namely, a minuter tactical detail of the minor operations of the war than any but the most observant and for-

tunately-placed staff-officer is in a position to give. I have read and re-read them very carefully, I hope with profit, certainly with great interest, and believe that practice, in the sense of these 'Studies,' would be a valuable preparation for manoeuvres on a more extended scale."—Berlin, June, 1872.

**THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR, 1870-71.**

FIRST PART:—HISTORY OF THE WAR TO THE DOWNFALL OF THE EMPIRE. FIRST SECTION:—THE EVENTS IN JULY. Authorised Translation from the German Official Account at the Topographical and Statistical Department of the War Office, by Captain F. C. H. CLARKE, R.A. First Section, with Map. Demy 8vo. 3s.

**DISCIPLINE AND DRILL.** Four Lectures delivered to the London Scottish Rifle Volunteers. By Captain S. FLOOD PAGE. A New and Cheaper Edition. Price 1s.

"One of the best-known and coolest-headed of the metropolitan regiments, whose adjutant moreover has lately published an admirable collection of lectures addressed by him to the men of his corps."—*Times*.

"The very useful and interesting work. . . . Every Volunteer, officer or pri-

vate, will be the better for perusing and digesting the plain-spoken truths which Captain Page so firmly, and yet so modestly, puts before them; and we trust that the little book in which they are contained will find its way into all parts of Great Britain."—*Volunteer Service Gazette*.

**THE SUBSTANTIVE SENIORITY ARMY LIST.** Majors and Captains. By Captain F. B. P. WHITE, 1st W. I. Regiment. 8vo, sewed. 2s. 6d.

---

65, Cornhill: & 12, Paternoster Row, London.

## Books on Indian Subjects.

### THE EUROPEAN IN INDIA.

A HAND-BOOK OF PRACTICAL INFORMATION FOR THOSE PROCEEDING  
TO, OR RESIDING IN, THE EAST INDIES,

RELATING TO OUTFITS, ROUTES, TIME FOR DEPARTURE, INDIAN CLIMATE, ETC.

By EDMUND C. P. HULL.

WITH A MEDICAL GUIDE FOR ANGLO-INDIANS.

BEING A COMPENDIUM OF ADVICE TO EUROPEANS IN INDIA, RELATING TO THE  
PRESERVATION AND REGULATION OF HEALTH.

By R. S. MAIR, M.D., F.R.C.S.E.,

Late Deputy Coroner of Madras.

In 1 vol. Post 8vo. 6s.

"Full of all sorts of useful information  
to the English settler or traveller in India."  
—*Standard*.

"One of the most valuable books ever  
published in India—valuable for its sound  
information, its careful array of pertinent  
facts, and its sterling common sense. It is

a publisher's as well as an author's 'hit,  
for it supplies a want which few persons  
may have discovered, but which everybody  
will at once recognise when once the con-  
tents of the book have been mastered.  
The medical part of the work is inval-  
uable."—*Calcutta Guardian*.

### EASTERN EXPERIENCES.

By L. BOWRING, C.S.I.,

Lord Canning's Private Secretary, and for many years the Chief Commissioner of  
Mysore and Coorg.

In 1 vol. Demy 8vo. 16s. Illustrated with Maps and Diagrams.

"An admirable and exhaustive geo-  
graphical, political, and industrial survey."  
—*Athenaeum*.

"The usefulness of this compact and  
methodical summary of the most authentic  
information relating to countries whose  
welfare is intimately connected with our  
own, should obtain for Mr. Lewin Bow-

ring's work a good place among treatises  
of its kind."—*Daily News*.

"Interesting even to the general reader,  
but more especially so to those who may  
have a special concern in that portion of  
our Indian Empire."—*Post*.

"An elaborately got up and carefully  
compiled work."—*Home News*.

### A MEMOIR OF THE INDIAN SURVEYS.

By CLEMENT R. MARKHAM.

Printed by order of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India in Council.

Imperial 8vo. 10s. 6d.

65, Cornhill; & 12, Paternoster Row, London.

---

BOOKS ON INDIAN SUBJECTS—*continued.*

**WESTERN INDIA BEFORE AND DURING  
THE MUTINIES.**

PICTURES DRAWN FROM LIFE.

BY MAJOR-GEN. SIR GEORGE LE GRAND JACOB, K.C.S.I., C.B.

In 1 vol. Crown 8vo. 7s. 6d.

"The most important contribution to the history of Western India during the Mutinies which has yet, in a popular form, been made public."—*Athenæum*.

"The legacy of a wise veteran, intent on the benefit of his countrymen rather

than on the acquisition of fame."—*London and China Express*.

"Few men more competent than himself to speak authoritatively concerning Indian affairs."—*Standard*.

---

**EXCHANGE TABLES OF STERLING AND  
INDIAN RUPEE CURRENCY,**

UPON A NEW AND EXTENDED SYSTEM,

EMBRACING VALUES FROM ONE FARTHING TO ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS, AND  
AT RATES PROGRESSING, IN SIXTEENTHS OF A PENNY,  
FROM 1s. 9d. TO 2s. 3d. PER RUPEE.

BY DONALD FRASER,

Accountant to the British Indian Steam Navigation Co., Limited.

Royal 8vo. 10s. 6d.

"The calculations must have entailed great labour on the author, but the work is one which we fancy must become a standard one in all business houses which

have dealings with any country where the rupee and the English pound are standard coins of currency."—*Inverness Courier*.

---

**A CATALOGUE OF MAPS OF THE BRITISH  
POSSESSIONS**

IN INDIA AND OTHER PARTS OF ASIA.

Published by order of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India in Council.

Royal 8vo, sewed. 1s.

A Continuation of the above, sewed, price 6d., is now ready.

---

*Messrs. Henry S. King & Co. are the authorised agents by the Government for the sale of the whole of the Maps enumerated in this Catalogue.*

---

65, Cornhill; & 12, Paternoster Row, London.



## Books for Juveniles.

**LOST GIP.** By HESBA STRETTON, Author of "Little Meg," "Alone in London." Square crown 8vo. Six Illustrations. Price 1s. 6d.

"The book is full of tender touches."—*Nonconformist*.

"Thoroughly enlists the sympathies of the reader."—*Church Review*.

**BRAVE MEN'S FOOTSTEPS.** A Book of Example and Anecdote for Young People. By the Editor of "MEN WHO HAVE RISEN." With Four Illustrations. By C. DOYLE. 3s. 6d.

"The little volume is precisely of the stamp to win the favour of those who, in choosing a gift for a boy, would consult his moral development as well as his temporary pleasure."—*Daily Telegraph*.

"A readable and instructive volume."—*Examiner*.

"No more welcome book for the school-boy could be imagined."—*Birmingham Daily Gazette*.

**THE LITTLE WONDER-HORN.** By JEAN INGELow. A Second Series of "Stories told to a Child." Fifteen Illustrations. Cloth, gilt. 3s. 6d.

"Full of fresh and vigorous fancy: it is worthy of the author of some of the best of our modern verse."—*Standard*.

"We like all the contents of the 'Little Wonder-Horn' very much."—*Athenæum*.

"We recommend it with confidence."—*Pall-Mall Gazette*.

**STORIES IN PRECIOUS STONES.** By HELEN ZIMMERN. With Six Illustrations. Crown 8vo. 5s.

"A pretty little book which fanciful young persons will appreciate, and which will remind its readers of many a legend, and many an imaginary virtue attached to the gems they are so fond of wearing."—*Post*.

fantastic, half natural, and pleasantly quaint, as befits stories intended for the young."—*Daily Telegraph*.

"Certainly the book is well worth a perusal, and will not be soon laid down when once taken up."—*Daily Bristol Times*.

**GUTTA-PERCHA WILLIE, THE WORKING GENIUS.** By GEORGE MACDONALD. With Illustrations. By ARTHUR HUGHES. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d.

**THE TRAVELLING MENAGERIE.** By CHARLES CAMDEN, Author of "Hoity Toity." Illustrated by J. MAHONEY. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d.

"A capital little book . . . deserves a wide circulation among our boys and girls."—*Hour*.

"A very attractive story."—*Public Opinion*.

**SEEKING HIS FORTUNE, AND OTHER STORIES.** Crown 8vo. Six Illustrations.

65, Cornhill; & 12, Paternoster Row, London.

BOOKS FOR JUVENILES—*continued.*

**PLUCKY FELLOWS.** A Book for Boys. By STEPHEN J. MACKENNA. With Six Illustrations. Crown 8vo. Price 3s. 6d.

"This is one of the very best 'Books for Boys' which have been issued this year."—*Morning Advertiser.*

"A thorough book for boys . . . written

throughout in a manly straightforward manner that is sure to win the hearts of the children for whom it is intended."—*London Society.*

**THE DESERTED SHIP.** A Real Story of the Atlantic. By CUPPLES HOWE, Master Mariner. Illustrated by TOWNLEY GREEN. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d.

"Curious adventures with bears, seals, and other Arctic animals, and with scarcely more human Esquimaux, form the mass of

material with which the story deals, and will much interest boys who have a spice of romance in their composition."—*Courant.*

**GOOD WORDS FOR THE YOUNG.** The Volume for 1872, gilt cloth and gilt edges, 7s. 6d. Containing numerous Contributions by popular authors, and about One Hundred and Fifty Illustrations by the best artists.

*New Edition.*

**THE DESERT PASTOR, JEAN JAROUSSEAU.** Translated from the French of EUGENE PELLETAN. By Colonel E. P. DE L'HOSTE. In fcap. 8vo, with an Engraved Frontispiece. Price 3s. 6d.

"There is a poetical simplicity and picturesqueness; the noblest heroism; unpretentious religion; pure love, and the spectacle of a household brought up in the fear of the Lord. . . . The whole story has an air of quaint antiquity similar to that which invests with a charm more easily felt than described the site of

some splendid ruin."—*Illustrated London News.*

"This charming specimen of Eugène Pelletan's tender grace, humour, and high-toned morality."—*Notes and Queries.*

"A touching record of the struggles in the cause of religious liberty of a real man."—*Graphic.*

**HOITY TOITY, THE GOOD LITTLE FELLOW.** By CHARLES CAMDEN. Illustrated. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d.

*THE "ELSIE" SERIES, 3s. 6d. each.*

**ELSIE DINSMORE.** By MARTHA FARQUHARSON. Crown 8vo. Illustrated.

**ELSIE'S GIRLHOOD.** A Sequel to "Elsie Dinsmore." By the same Author. Crown 8vo. Illustrated.

**ELSIE'S HOLIDAYS AT ROSELANDS.** By the same Author. Crown 8vo. Illustrated.

65, Cornhill; & 12, Paternoster Row, London.

## Poetry.

**VIGNETTES IN VERSE.** By AUSTIN DOBSON.  
Crown 8vo.

**IMITATIONS FROM THE GERMAN OF  
SPITTA AND TERSTEGEN.** By Lady DURAND. Crown  
8vo. 4s.

"An acceptable addition to the religious poetry of the day."—*Courant*.

**EASTERN LEGENDS AND STORIES IN  
ENGLISH VERSE.** By Lieutenant NORTON POWLETT,  
Royal Artillery. Crown 8vo. 5s.

"Have we at length found a successor  
to Thomas Ingoldsby? We are almost  
inclined to hope so after reading 'Eastern  
Legends.' There is a rollicking sense of

fun about the stories, joined to marvellous  
power of rhyming, and plenty of swing,  
which irresistibly reminds us of our old  
favourite."—*Graphic*.

**EDITH; or, LOVE AND LIFE IN CHESHIRE.**  
By T. ASHE, Author of the "Sorrows of Hypsipylé," etc. Sewed.  
Price 6d.

"A really fine poem, full of tender,  
subtle touches of feeling."—*Manchester  
News*.

"Pregnant from beginning to end with  
the results of careful observation and ima-  
ginative power."—*Chester Chronicle*.

**THE GALLERY OF PIGEONS, AND OTHER  
POEMS.** By THEO. MARZIALS. Crown 8vo. 4s. 6d.

"A conceit abounding in prettiness."—  
*Examiner*.

"Contains as clear evidence as a book  
can contain that its composition was a

source of keen and legitimate enjoyment.  
The rush of fresh, sparkling fancies is too  
rapid, too sustained, too abundant, not to  
be spontaneous."—*Academy*.

**A NEW VOLUME OF SONNETS.** By the Rev.  
C. TENNYSON TURNER. Crown 8vo. 4s. 6d.

"Mr. Turner is a genuine poet; his song  
is sweet and pure, beautiful in expression,

and often subtle in thought."—*Pall Mall  
Gazette*.

**ENGLISH SONNETS.** Collected and Arranged by  
JOHN DENNIS. Small crown 8vo.

**WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT'S POEMS.**  
Handsomely bound, with Illustrations.  
A Cheaper Edition.  
A Pocket Edition.

65, Cornhill; & 12, Paternoster Row, London.

POETRY—continued.

**GOETHE'S FAUST.** A New Translation in Rhyme.

By the Rev. C. KEGAN PAUL. Crown 8vo. 6s.

"His translation is the most minutely accurate that has yet been produced. . . . Has special merits of its own, and will be useful and welcome to English students of Goethe."—*Examiner*.

"Mr. Paul evidently understands

'Faust,' and his translation is as well suited to convey its meaning to English readers as any we have yet seen."—*Edinburgh Daily Review*.

"Mr. Paul is a zealous and a faithful interpreter."—*Saturday Review*.

**CALDERON'S DRAMAS.**

THE PURGATORY OF ST. PATRICK.

THE WONDERFUL MAGICIAN.

LIFE IS A DREAM.

Translated from the Spanish. By DENIS FLORENCE MAC-CARTHY. Price 10s.

These translations have never before been published. The "Purgatory of St. Patrick" is a new version, with new and elaborate historical notes.

**SONGS FOR SAILORS.** By Dr. W. C. BENNETT.

Dedicated by Special Request to H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d. With Steel Portrait and Illustrations.

An Edition in Illustrated paper Covers. Price 1s.

**DR. W. C. BENNETT'S POEMS** will be shortly

Re-issued, with additions to each part, in Five Parts, at 1s. each.

**WALLED IN, AND OTHER POEMS.** By the

Rev. HENRY J. BULKELY. Crown 8vo. 5s.

"A remarkable book of genuine poetry which will be welcome to all lovers of the Muse."—*Evening Standard*.

"Mr. Bulkeley has successfully at-

tempted what has seldom before been well done, viz. : the treatment of subjects not in themselves poetical from a poetic point of view."—*Graphic*.

**THE POETICAL AND PROSE WORKS OF**

ROBERT BUCHANAN. Preparing for publication, a Collected Edition, in 5 vols.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I.—

DAUGHTERS OF EVE.

UNDERTONES AND ANTIQUES.

COUNTRY AND PASTORAL POEMS.

**SONGS OF LIFE AND DEATH.** By JOHN

PAYNE, Author of "Intaglios," "Sonnets," "The Masque of Shadows," etc. Crown 8vo. 5s.

"The art of ballad-writing has long been lost in England, and Mr. Payne may claim to be its restorer. It is a perfect delight to

meet with such a ballad as 'May Margaret' in the present volume."—*Westminster Review*.

65, Cornhill; & 12, Paternoster Row, London.

## POETRY—continued.

**SONGS OF TWO WORLDS.** By a NEW WRITER.

Fcap. 8vo, cloth, 5s. Second Edition.

"The 'New Writer' is certainly no tyro. No one after reading the first two poems, almost perfect in rhythm and all the graceful reserve of true lyrical strength, can doubt that this book is the result of lengthened thought and assiduous training in poetical form. . . . These poems will assuredly take high rank among the class to which they belong."—*British Quarterly Review*, April 1st.

"If these poems are the mere preludes of a mind growing in power and in inclination for verse, we have in them the promise of a fine poet. . . . The verse describ-

ing Socrates has the highest note of critical poetry."—*Spectator*, February 17th.

"No extracts could do justice to the exquisite tones, the felicitous phrasing and delicately wrought harmonies of some of these poems."—*Nonconformist*, March 27th.

"Are we in this book making the acquaintance of a fine and original poet, or of a most artistic imitator? And our deliberate opinion is that the former hypothesis is the right one. It has a purity and delicacy of feeling like morning air."—*Graphic*, March 16th.

**THE INN OF STRANGE MEETINGS, AND OTHER POEMS.** By MORTIMER COLLINS. Crown 8vo. 5s.

"Abounding in quiet humour, in bright fancy, in sweetness and melody of expression, and, at times, in the tenderest touches of pathos."—*Graphic*

"Mr. Collins has an undercurrent of

chivalry and romance beneath the trifling vein of good humoured banter which is the special characteristic of his verse.

The 'Inn of Strange Meetings' is a sprightly piece."—*Athenæum*.

**EROS AGONISTES.** By E. B. D. Crown 8vo. 3s. 6d.

"The author of these verses has written a very touching story of the human heart in the story he tells with such pathos and power, of an affection cherished so long and so secretly. . . . It is not the

least merit of these pages that they are everywhere illumined with moral and religious sentiment suggested, not paraded, of the brightest, purest character."—*Standard*.

**ASPROMONTE, AND OTHER POEMS.** Second Edition, cloth. 4s. 6d.

"The volume is anonymous, but there is no reason for the author to be ashamed of it. The 'Poems of Italy' are evidently inspired by genuine enthusiasm in the cause espoused; and one of them, 'The

Execution of Felice Orsini,' has much poetic merit, the event celebrated being told with dramatic force."—*Athenæum*.

"The verse is fluent and free."—*Spectator*.

**THE DREAM AND THE DEED, AND OTHER POEMS.** By PATRICK SCOTT, Author of "Footpaths between Two Worlds," etc. Fcap. 8vo, cloth, 5s.

"A bitter and able satire on the vice and follies of the day, literary, social, and political."—*Standard*.

"Shows real poetic power coupled with evidences of satirical energy."—*Edinburgh Daily Review*.

65, Cornhill; & 12, Paternoster Row, London.

POETRY—continued.

**THE LEGENDS OF ST. PATRICK & OTHER**

POEMS. By AUBREY DE VERE. Crown 8vo. 5s.

"Mr. De Vere's versification in his earlier poems is characterised by great sweetness and simplicity. He is master of his instrument, and rarely offends the ear with false notes. Poems such as these scarcely admit of quotation, for their charm is not, and ought not to be, found in isolated passages; but we can promise the patient and thoughtful reader much pleasure in the perusal of this volume."—*Pall-Mall Gazette*.

"We have marked, in almost every

page, excellent touches from which we know not how to select. We have but space to commend the varied structure of his verse, the carefulness of his grammar, and his excellent English. All who believe that poetry should raise and not debase the social ideal, all who think that wit should exalt our standard of thought and manners, must welcome this contribution at once to our knowledge of the past and to the science of noble life."—*Saturday Review*.

**Fiction.**

**THE QUEEN'S SHILLING.** By Capt. ARTHUR GRIFFITHS, Author of "Peccavi." 2 vols. [*Just out.*]

**MIRANDA: A Midsummer Madness.** By MORTIMER COLLINS. 3 vols. [*Just out.*]

**REGINALD BRAMBLE.** A Cynic of the 19th Century. An Autobiography. One Volume.

"There is plenty of vivacity in Mr. Bramble's narrative."—*Athenæum*.

"Reginald Bramble, from the introduc-

tory chapter of his autobiography to the concluding one, is the best of good company."—*Court Express*.

**BRESSANT. A Romance.** By JULIAN HAWTHORNE. 2 vols. Crown 8vo.

"Mr. Hawthorne's book forms a remarkable contrast, in point of power and interest, to the dreary mass of so-called romances through which the reviewer works his way. An accomplished native imparts to us, with the vivid and vigorous hand which characterises the best American writing, studies of individual humanity,

which add to what universal interest they possess a charm of their own. . . . Will be pretty certain of meeting in this country a grateful and appreciative reception."—*Athenæum*.

"Wonderfully powerful."—*Literary Churchman*.

**EFFIE'S GAME; How she Lost and how she Won.**

By CECIL CLAYTON. 2 vols.

"Well written. The characters move, and act, and above all, talk like human

beings, and we have liked reading about them."—*Spectator*.

**WHAT 'TIS TO LOVE.** By the Author of "FLORA ADAIR," "THE VALUE OF FOSTERTOWN." 3 vols.

**A CHEQUERED LIFE.** Being Memoirs of Madame La Vicomtesse de Leoville-Meilhan. By LA VICOMTESSE DE KERKADEC. Crown 8vo.

## FICTION—continued.

**CHESTERLEIGH.** By **ANSLEY CONYERS.** 3 vols.

Crown 8vo.

"We have gained much enjoyment from the book."—*Spectator*.

"Is worthy of high praise."—*Edinburgh Courier*.

"Will suit the hosts of readers of the higher class of romantic fiction."—*Morning Advertiser*.

**SQUIRE SILCHESTER'S WHIM.** By **MORTIMER COLLINS,** Author of "Marquis and Merchant," "The Princess Clarice," &c. Crown 8vo. 3 vols.

"We think it the best (story) Mr. Collins has yet written."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

**SEETA.** By **Colonel MEADOWS TAYLOR,** Author of

"Tara," "Ralph Darnell," &c. Crown 8vo. 3 vols.

"The story is well told, native life is admirably described, and the petty intrigues of native rulers, and their hatred of the English, mingled with fear lest the latter should eventually prove the victors, are cleverly depicted."—*Athenæum*.

"We cannot speak too highly of Colonel Meadows Taylor's book. . . . We would recommend all novel readers to purchase it at the earliest opportunity."—*John Bull*.

"Thoroughly interesting and enjoyable reading."—*Examiner*.

*A New and Cheaper Edition, in 1 vol., each Illustrated, price 6s., of*

**COL. MEADOWS TAYLOR'S INDIAN TALES**

is preparing for publication. The first volume is

**THE CONFESSIONS OF A THUG.**

**JOHANNES OLAF.** By **E. DE WILLE.** Translated by **F. E. BUNNETT.** Crown 8vo. 3 vols.

The author of this story enjoys a high reputation in Germany; and both English and German critics have spoken in terms of the warmest praise of this and her previous stories. She has been called "The 'George Eliot' of Germany."

"The book gives evidence of consider-

able capacity in every branch of a novelist's faculty. The art of description is fully exhibited; perception of character and capacity for delineating it are obvious; while there is great breadth and comprehensiveness in the plan of the story."—*Morning Post*.

**OFF THE SKELLIGS.** By **JEAN INGELow.** (Her

First Romance.) Crown 8vo.

In 4 vols.

"Clever and sparkling. . . . The descriptive passages are bright with colour."—*Standard*.

"We read each succeeding volume with increasing interest, going almost to the

point of wishing there was a fifth."—*Athenæum*.

The novel as a whole is a remarkable one, because it is uncompromisingly true to life."—*Daily News*.

**HONOR BLAKE: The Story of a Plain Woman.**

By **Mrs. KEATINGE,** Author of "English Homes in India," &c.

2 vols. Crown 8vo.

"One of the best novels we have met with for some time."—*Morning Post*.

"A story which must do good to all, young and old, who read it."—*Daily News*.

65, Cornhill; & 12, Paternoster Row, London.

FICTION—continued.

**THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA.** By HESBA STRET-

TON, Author of "Little Meg," &c., &c. Crown 8vo. 3 vols.

"If our readers wish to peruse for the sake of pure entertainment, a fascinating story which scarcely flags in interest from the first page to the last, we advise them to submit themselves to the romantic pages of 'The Doctor's Dilemma.' It is all story; every page contributes something to the result."—*British Quarterly Review*.

**THE PRINCESS CLARICE. A Story of 1871.**

By MORTIMER COLLINS. 2 vols. Crown 8vo.

"Mr. Collins has produced a readable book, amusingly characteristic. There is good description of Devonshire scenery; and lastly there is Clarice, a most successful heroine, who must speak to the reader for herself."—*Athenæum*.

"Very readable and amusing. We would especially give an honourable mention to Mr. Collins's '*vers de société*,' the writing of which has almost become a lost art."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

"A bright, fresh, and original book, with which we recommend all genuine novel readers to become acquainted at the earliest opportunity."—*Standard*.

**A GOOD MATCH.** By AMELIA PERRIER, Author

of "Mea Culpa." 2 vols.

"Racy and lively."—*Athenæum*.

"As pleasant and readable a novel as we have seen this season."—*Examiner*.

"This clever and amusing novel."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

"Agreeably written."—*Public Opinion*.

**THE SPINSTERS OF BLATCHINGTON.** By

MAR. TRAVERS. 2 vols. Crown 8vo.

"A pretty story. Deserving of a favourable reception."—*Graphic*.

"A book of more than average merits, worth reading."—*Examiner*.

**THOMASINA.** By the Author of "DOROTHY," "DE

CRESSY," etc. 2 vols. Crown 8vo.

"A finished and delicate cabinet picture, no line is without its purpose, but all contribute to the unity of the work."—*Athenæum*.

"For the delicacies of character-drawing,

for play of incident, and for finish of style, we must refer our readers to the story itself."—*Daily News*.

"This undeniably pleasing story."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

**THE STORY OF SIR EDWARD'S WIFE.** By

HAMILTON MARSHALL, Author of "For Very Life."

1 vol. Crown 8vo.

"A quiet graceful little story."—*Spec-*

*tator*.

"There are many clever conceits in it.

... Mr. Hamilton Marshall can tell a story closely and pleasantly."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

**LINKED AT LAST.** By F. E. BUNNETT. 1 vol.

Crown 8vo.

"'Linked at Last' contains so much of pretty description, natural incident, and delicate portraiture, that the reader who once takes it up will not be inclined to re-

linquish it without concluding the volume."—*Morning Post*.

"A very charming story."—*John Bull*.



## FICTION—continued.

**PERPLEXITY.** By SYDNEY MOSTYN. 3 vols. Crown 8vo.

"Written with very considerable power . . . original . . . worked out with great cleverness and sustained interest."—*Standard*.

"Shows much lucidity—much power of portraiture."—*Examiner*.

"Forcibly and graphically told."—*Daily News*.

"Written with very considerable power,

the plot is original and . . . worked out with great cleverness and sustained interest."—*Standard*.

"Shows much lucidity, much power of portraiture, and no inconsiderable sense of humour."—*Examiner*.

"The literary workmanship is good, and the story forcibly and graphically told."—*Daily News*.

**HER TITLE OF HONOUR.** By HOLME LEE. Second Edition. 1 vol. Crown 8vo.

"With the interest of a pathetic story is united the value of a definite and high purpose."—*Spectator*.

"A most exquisitely written story."—*Literary Churchman*.

**CRUEL AS THE GRAVE.** By the Countess VON BOTHMER. 3 vols. Crown 8vo.

"*Jealousy is cruel as the Grave.*"

"An interesting, though somewhat tragic story."—*Athenaeum*.

"An agreeable, unaffected, and eminently readable novel."—*Daily News*.

**MEMOIRS OF MRS. LÆTITIA BOOTHBY.** By WILLIAM CLARK RUSSELL, Author of "The Book of Authors." Crown 8vo. 7s. 6d.

"The book is clever and ingenious."—*Saturday Review*.

"One of the most delightful books I have read for a very long while. Very few works of truth or fiction are so thoroughly

entertaining from the first page to the last."—*Judy*.

"This is a very clever book, one of the best imitations of the productions of the last century that we have seen."—*Guardian*.

Eleventh Thousand.

**LITTLE HODGE.** A Christmas Country Carol. By EDWARD JENKINS, Author of "Ginx's Baby," &c. Illustrated. Crown 8vo. 5s. A Cheap Edition in paper covers, price 1s.

"We shall be mistaken if it does not obtain a very wide circle of readers."—*United Service Gazette*.

"Wise and humorous, but yet most pathetic."—*Nonconformist*.

"The pathos of some of the passages is extremely touching."—*Manchester Examiner*.

"One of the most seasonable of Christmas stories."—*Literary World*.

Twenty-ninth Edition.

**GINX'S BABY; HIS BIRTH AND OTHER MISFORTUNES.** By EDWARD JENKINS. Crown 8vo. Price 2s.

Sixth Edition.

**LORD BANTAM.** By EDWARD JENKINS, Author of "Ginx's Baby." Crown 8vo. Price 2s.

65, Cornhill; & 12, Paternoster Row, London.

FICTION—continued.

Second Edition.

**HERMANN AGHA: An Eastern Narrative.** By W. GIFFORD PALGRAVE, Author of "Travels in Central Arabia," &c. 2 vols. Crown 8vo, cloth, extra gilt. 18s.

"Reads like a tale of life, with all its incidents. The young will take to it for its love portions, the older for its descriptions, some in this day for its Arab philosophy."—*Athenæum*.

"The cardinal merit, however, of the story is, to our thinking, the exquisite sim-

plicity and purity of the love portion. There is a positive fragrance as of newly-mown hay about it, as compared with the artificially perfumed passions which are detailed to us with such gusto by our ordinary novel-writers in their endless volumes."—*Observer*.

Second Edition.

**SEPTIMIUS. A Romance.** By NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE. Author of "The Scarlet Letter," "Transformation," &c. 1 vol. Crown 8vo, cloth, extra gilt. 9s.

A peculiar interest attaches to this work. It was the last thing the author wrote, and he may be said to have died as he finished it.

The *Athenæum* says that "the book is full of Hawthorne's most characteristic writing."

"One of the best examples of Haw-

thorne's writing; every page is impressed with his peculiar view of thought, conveyed in his own familiar way."—*Post*.

**PANDURANG HARI; Or, Memoirs of a Hindoo.** A Tale of Mahratta Life sixty years ago. With a Preface, by Sir H. BARTLE E. FRERE, G.C.S.I., &c. 2 vols. Cr. 8vo. Price 21s.

**THE TASMANIAN LILY.** By JAMES BONWICK, Author of "Curious Facts of Old Colonial Days," &c. Crown 8vo. Illustrated. Price 5s.

*The Cornhill Library of Fiction.*

3s. 6d. per Volume.

IT is intended in this Series to produce books of such merit that readers will care to preserve them on their shelves.

They are well printed on good paper, handsomely bound, with a Frontispiece, and are sold at the moderate price of 3s. 6d. each.

**GOD'S PROVIDENCE HOUSE.** By Mrs. G. L. BANKS.

**READY MONEY MORTI-BOY.** A Matter-of-Fact Story.

**ROBIN GRAY.** By CHARLES GIBBON. With a Frontispiece by HENNESSY.

**HIRELL.** By JOHN SAUNDERS, Author of "Abel Drake's Wife."

**KITTY.** By Miss M. BETHAM-EDWARDS.

**ONE OF TWO.** By J. HAIN FRISWELL, Author of "The Gentle Life," etc.

OTHER STANDARD NOVELS TO FOLLOW.

65, Cornhill; & 12, Paternoster Row, London.

## Forthcoming Novels.

**CIVIL SERVICE.** By J. T. LISTADO, Author of "Maurice Reinhart." 2 vols.

**VANESSA.** By the Author of "THOMASINA," etc. 2 vols.

**A LITTLE WORLD.** By GEO. MANVILLE FENN, Author of "The Sapphire Cross," "Mad," etc.

**TOO LATE:** By Mrs. NEWMAN. 2 vols. Crown 8vo.

**LADY MORETOUN'S DAUGHTER.** By Mrs. EILOART. 3 vols.

**TWO GIRLS.** By FREDK. WEDMORE, Author of "A Snapt Gold Ring." 2 vols. Crown 8vo.

**HEATHERGATE.** In 2 vols.

## Theological.

**HYMNS AND VERSES,** Original and Translated. By the Rev. HENRY DOWNTON. Small crown 8vo, 3s. 6d.

**THE ETERNAL LIFE.** Being Fourteen Sermons.

By the Rev. JAS. NOBLE BENNIE, M.A. Crown 8vo. 6s.

"We recommend these sermons as wholesome Sunday reading."—*English Churchman*.

"Very chaste and pure in style, simple and neat in arrangement."—*Courant*.

"The whole volume is replete with matter for thought and study."—*John Bull*.

"Mr. Bennie preaches earnestly and well."—*Literary Churchman*.

**MISSIONARY ENTERPRISE IN THE EAST.**

By the Rev. RICHARD COLLINS. Illustrated. Crown 8vo. 6s.

**THE REALM OF TRUTH.** By Miss E. T. CARNE.

Crown 8vo. 5s. 6d.

**HYMNS FOR THE CHURCH AND HOME.**

Selected and Edited by the Rev. W. FLEMING STEVENSON, Author of "Praying and Working."

*The hymn-book consists of three parts:—*

I. For Public Worship.

II. For Family and Private Worship.

III. For Children; and contains Biographical Notices of nearly 300 Hymn-writers, with Notes upon their Hymns.

65, Cornhill; & 12, Paternoster Row, London.

THEOLOGICAL—continued.

Third Edition.

**THE YOUNG LIFE EQUIPPING ITSELF**

FOR GOD'S SERVICE. Being Four Sermons Preached before the University of Cambridge in November, 1872. By the Rev. J. C. VAUGHAN, D.D., Master of the Temple. Crown 8vo. Price 3s. 6d.

"Has all the writer's characteristics of devotedness, purity, and high moral tone."—*London Quarterly Review*.

"As earnest, eloquent, and as liberal as

everything else that he writes."—*Examiner*.

"Earnest in tone and eloquent in treaty."—*Manchester Examiner*.

**WORDS & WORKS IN A LONDON PARISH.**

Edited by the Rev. CHARLES ANDERSON, M.A. Demy 8vo. 6s.

"It has an interest of its own for not a few minds, to whom the question 'Is the National Church worth preserving as

such, and if so how best increase its vital power?' is of deep and grave importance."—*Spectator*.

**LIFE: Conferences delivered at Toulouse. By the Rev.**

PÈRE LACORDAIRE. Crown 8vo. 6s.

"Let the serious reader cast his eye upon any single page in this volume, and he will find there words which will arrest his attention and give him a desire to know more of the teachings of this worthy follower of the saintly St. Dominick."—*Morning Post*.

"The book is worth studying as an evidence of the way in which an able man may be crippled by theological chains."—*Examiner*.

"The discourses are simple, natural, and unaffectedly eloquent."—*Public Opinion*.

Fourth Edition.

**THOUGHTS FOR THE TIMES. By the Rev.**

H. R. HAWEIS, M.A., "Author of Music and Morals," etc. Crown 8vo. 7s. 6d.

"Bears marks of much originality of thought and individuality of expression."—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

"Mr. Haweis writes not only fearlessly,

but with remarkable freshness and vigour. In all that he says we perceive a transparent honesty and singleness of purpose."—*Saturday Review*.

**CATHOLICISM AND THE VATICAN. With a**

Narrative of the Old Catholic Congress at Munich. By J. LOWRY WHITTLE, A.M., Trin. Coll., Dublin. Second Edition. Crown 8vo. 4s. 6d.

"A valuable and philosophic contribution to the solution of one of the greatest questions of this stirring age."—*Church Times*.

"We cannot follow the author through his graphic and lucid sketch of the Catholic

movement in Germany and of the Munich Congress, at which he was present; but we may cordially recommend his book to all who wish to follow the course of the movement."—*Saturday Review*.

65, Cornhill; & 12, Paternoster Row, London.

## THEOLOGICAL—continued.

**NAZARETH: ITS LIFE AND LESSONS.** By the REV. G. S. DREW, Vicar of Trinity, Lambeth. Second Edition. In small 8vo, cloth. 5s.

*"In Him was life, and the life was the light of men."*

"A singularly reverent and beautiful book; the style in which it is written is not less chaste and attractive than its subject."—*Daily Telegraph*.

"Perhaps one of the most remarkable books recently issued in the whole range of

English theology. . . . Original in design, calm and appreciative in language, noble and elevated in style, this book, we venture to think, will live."—*Churchman's Magazine*.

**SCRIPTURE LANDS IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR HISTORY.** By G. S. DREW, M.A., Vicar of Trinity, Lambeth, Author of "Reasons of Faith." Second Edition.

Bevelled boards, 8vo. Price 10s. 6d.

"Mr. Drew has invented a new method of illustrating Scripture history—from observation of the countries. Instead of narrating his travels, and referring from time to time to the facts of sacred history belonging to the different countries, he writes an outline history of the Hebrew nation from Abraham downwards, with special reference to the various points in which the geography illustrates the history. The advantages of this plan are obvious. Mr. Drew thus gives us not a mere imitation of 'Sinai and Palestine,' but

a view of the same subject from the other side. . . . He is very successful in picturing to his readers the scenes before his own mind. The position of Abraham in Palestine is portrayed, both socially and geographically, with great vigour. Mr. Drew has given an admirable account of the Hebrew sojourn in Egypt, and has done much to popularise the newly-acquired knowledge of Assyria in connection with the two Jewish Kingdoms."—*Saturday Review*.

**MEMORIES OF VILLIERSTOWN.** By C. J. S. Crown 8vo. With Frontispiece. 5s.

**SIX PRIVY COUNCIL JUDGMENTS—1850-1872.** Annotated by W. G. BROOKE, M.A., Barrister-at-Law. Crown 8vo. 9s.

**THE DIVINE KINGDOM ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.** By the Author of "Nazareth: its Life and Lessons." In demy 8vo, bound in cloth. Price 10s. 6d.

*"Our Commonwealth is in Heaven."*

"A high purpose and a devout spirit characterize this work. It is thoughtful and eloquent. . . . The most valuable and suggestive chapter is entitled 'Fulfillments in Life and Ministry of Christ,' which is full of original thinking admirably expressed."—*British Quarterly Review*.

"It is seldom that, in the course of our critical duties, we have to deal with a

volume of any size or pretension so entirely valuable and satisfactory as this. Published anonymously as it is, there is no living divine to whom the authorship would not be a credit. . . . Not the least of its merits is the perfect simplicity and clearness, conjoined with a certain massive beauty, of its style."—*Literary Churchman*.

## **Life & Works of the Rev. Fred. W. Robertson.**

NEW AND CHEAPER EDITIONS.

### **LIFE AND LETTERS.**

Edited by STOFFORD BROOKE, M.A., Chaplain in Ordinary to the Queen.

In 2 vols., uniform with the Sermons.

Price 7s. 6d.

Library Edition, in demy 8vo, with Two Steel Portraits. 12s.

A Popular Edition, in 1 vol. Price 6s.

### **SERMONS. FOUR SERIES.**

4 vols. small crown 8vo, price 3s. 6d. per vol.

### **EXPOSITORY LECTURES**

ON ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE CORINTHIANS. Small crown 8vo. 5s.

### **AN ANALYSIS OF MR.**

TENNYSON'S "IN MEMORIAM." (Dedicated by permission to the Poet-Laureate.) Fcap. 8vo. 2s.

### **THE EDUCATION OF**

THE HUMAN RACE. Translated from the German of GOTTHOLD EPHRAIM LESSING. Fcap. 8vo. 2s. 6d.

### **LECTURES & ADDRESSES**

ON LITERARY AND SOCIAL TOPICS. Small crown 8vo. 3s. 6d. [Preparing.]

### **A LECTURE ON FRED.**

W. ROBERTSON, M.A. By the Rev. F. A. NOBLE, delivered before the Young Men's Christian Association of Pittsburgh, U.S. 1s. 6d.

## **Sermons by the Rev. Stofford J. Brooke, M.A.,**

Chaplain in Ordinary to Her Majesty the Queen.

### **CHRIST IN MODERN LIFE.** Sermons Preached

in St. James's Chapel, York Street, London. Third Edition.

Crown 8vo. 7s. 6d.

"Nobly fearless and singularly strong. . . . carries our admiration throughout."  
—*British Quarterly Review*.

### **FREEDOM IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.**

Six Sermons suggested by the Voysey Judgment. Second Edition.

In 1 vol. Crown 8vo, cloth. 3s. 6d.

"A very fair statement of the views in respect to freedom of thought held by the liberal party in the Church of England."—*Blackwood's Magazine*.

"Interesting and readable, and characterised by great clearness of thought, frankness of statement, and moderation of tone."—*Church Opinion*.

### **SERMONS** Preached in St. James's Chapel, York Street,

London. Sixth Edition. Crown 8vo. 6s.

"No one who reads these sermons will wonder that Mr. Brooke is a great power in London, that his chapel is thronged, and his followers large and enthusiastic."

They are fiery, energetic, impetuous sermons, rich with the treasures of a cultivated imagination."—*Guardian*.

### **THE LIFE AND WORK OF FREDERICK**

DENISON MAURICE: A Memorial Sermon. Crown 8vo, sewed. 1s.

65, Cornhill; & 12, Paternoster Row, London.

# THE DAY OF REST.

*Weekly, price ONE PENNY, and in MONTHLY PARTS, price SIXPENCE.*

**ILLUSTRATED BY THE BEST ARTISTS.**

Among the leading Contributions to the First Year's Issue may be mentioned :—

## **WORDS FOR THE DAY.**

By C. J. VAUGHAN, D.D., Master of the Temple.

## **LABOURS OF LOVE :**

Being further Accounts of what is being done by Dr. WICHERN and others. By the Rev. W. FLEMING STEVENSON, Author of "Praying and Working."

## **OCCASIONAL PAPERS.**

By the Rev. THOMAS BINNEY.

## **THE BATTLE OF THE POOR :**

Sketches from Courts and Alleys. By HESBA STRETTON, Author of "Jessica's First Prayer," and "Little Meg's Children."

## **TO ROME AND BACK :**

A Narrative of Personal Experience. By One who has made the Journey.

\*.\* The late Dr. Norman Macleod, during the last few months of his life, frequently urged the preparation of a series of Popular Papers, by a thoroughly competent person, on the Church of Rome as it really is to-day. "To Rome and Back" is the result of his suggestion.

## **SUNDAYS IN MY LIFE.**

By the Author of "Episodes in an Obscure Life."

## **SONGS OF REST.**

By GEORGE MACDONALD.

**Price ONE PENNY Weekly. MONTHLY PARTS, Price Sixpence.**

**THE CONTEMPORARY REVIEW.** Theological, Literary, and Social. Price Half-a-Crown Monthly.

**THE SAINT PAULS MAGAZINE.** Light and Choice. Price One Shilling Monthly.

**GOOD THINGS for the YOUNG of ALL AGES.**

Edited by GEORGE MACDONALD. And Illustrated by the best Artists. Price Sixpence Monthly.





